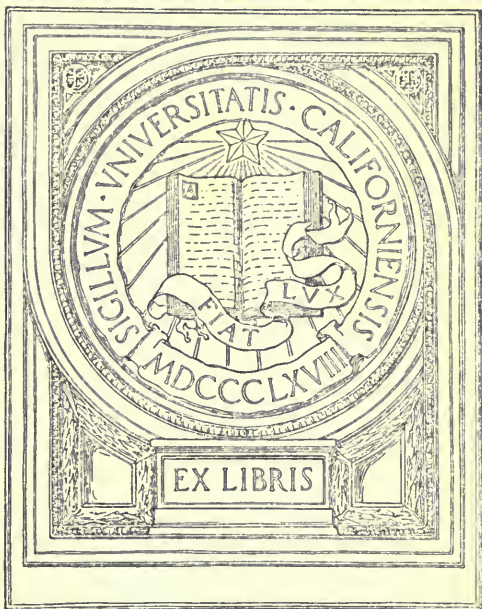




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Orberry's Edition.

THE COUNTRY GIRL.

A COMEDY;

ALTERED FROM WYCHERLEY,

By David Garrick.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED

WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

BY W. OXBERRY, Comedian.

London.

PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS, BY W. SIMPKIN, AND
R. MARSHALL, STATIONERS' COURT, LUDGATE-STREET;
AND C. CHAPPLE, 66, FALL-MALL.

1819,

TO THE
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Remarks.

THE COUNTRY GIRL.

The language and characters of the Country Girl are sprightly and entertaining; there is not perhaps much wit or humour in the dialogue, but it is entertaining from its archness, and the characters are natural and well discriminated. Take it altogether the comedy does not belong to the higher class of the drama; it however holds a distinguished place in the second rank of excellence, no little praise, if we consider the many and admirable pieces of which it thus takes precedence.

This style of writing is often more effective in the representation than that which in reality is its superior; it is more easily, and therefore better, acted, with the additional advantage of presenting nothing but what is familiar to the minds and habits of the least informed spectators. A Moody and a Peggy are by no means of so rare occurrence that we need be at a loss to understand their characters or their language. They speak the dialogue of general life, and though their oddities might raise a smile at the follies of fashion, they would not be considered more whimsical than the many monsters which are daily exhibited uncaged and unfettered in the streets of the metropolis. Perhaps the great beauty of this comedy is, that nothing in it is overcharged; there is much whim ✓ but no caricature.

The plot is interesting and sufficiently probable for dramatic purposes:—The incidents are not numerous, but to make amends are compacted into a whole, from which nothing can be taken without detriment to the remainder; in fact the two parts of the plot are so well linked together and so intimately connected, that it is not very easy at first sight to distinguish the double fictions; they have all the appearance of unity. Of course we speak of it as now printed and acted; Garrick has deviated considerably from the original, whether to the advantage of the piece in the closet

we will not pretend to say, but as a production for the stage it certainly has been infinitely improved by his judicious alterations. It is a melancholy truth, that while many of our most brilliant dramas are utterly ineffective when acted, their inferior rivals are played with unbounded approbation; nor is there in this a just cause for wonder; it can scarcely be otherwise; the one is so sublime in its beauty that it is neither to be acted or understood but by minds familiar with poetry, and capable of its excellence; neither the actor nor the very limited powers of scenic deception can realize its fictions; whereas the good-humoured every-day-efforts of the minor drama have all the advantages which arise out of humbleness; every one comprehends, and every one is familiar with them; nothing is attempted but what is realized, and if the reader is never much pleased, the spectator will never be much disappointed.

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MR. HART.

Poets, like cudgell'd bullies, never do
At first or second blow submit to you;
But will provoke you still, and ne'er have done,
Till you are weary first with laying on.
The late so baffled scribbler of this day,
Though he stands trembling, bids me boldly say,
What we before most plays are us'd to do,
(For poets, out of fear, first draw on you);
In a fierce prologue, the still pit defy,
And ere you speak, like Kastril, give the lie:
But though our Bayes's battles oft I've fought,
And with bruis'd knuckles their dear conquests bought;
Nay, never yet fear'd odds upon the stage,
In prologue dare not hector with the age;
But would take quarter from your saving hands,
Though Bayes within all yielding countermands;
Says you confed'rate wits no quarter give,
Therefore his play shan't ask your leave to live.—
Well, let the vain, rash fop, by huffing so,
Think to obtain the better terms of you;
But we, the actors, humbly will submit,
Now, and at any time, to a full pit;
Nay, often we anticipate your rage,
And murder poets for you on our stage:
We set no guards upon our tiring-room;
But when with flying colours there you come,
We patiently, you see, give up to you
Our poets, virgins, nay, our matrons too.

Stage Directions.

By R.H.....	is meant.....	Right Hand.
L.H.....		Left Hand.
S.E.....		Second Entrance.
U.E.....		Upper Entrance.
M.D.....		Middle Door.
D.F.....		Door in Flat.
R.H.D.....		Right Hand Door.
L.H.D.....		Left Hand Door.

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation, is one hour and thirty-four minutes. The first act occupies the space of fifteen minutes;—the second, twenty-one;—the third, fifteen;—the fourth twenty-five;—and the fifth, eighteen. The half price commences, generally, at a quarter before nine o'clock.

Costume.

MOODY.

Drab coat, gilt buttons, scarlet kerseymere waistcoat bound with gold brocade; a pair of drab breeches, shoes, buckles, and drab stockings.

HARCOURT.

Blue coat, white waistcoat, black dress breeches, and opera hat.

SPARKISH.

A black velvet coat, full dress, lined with buff silk, gold buttons; buff silk, waistcoat and breeches, and opera dress hat.

BELVILLE.

A green coat, white waistcoat, dress breeches, and opera hat.

FOOTMAN.

A suit of livery.

COUNTRYMAN.

Drab cloth livery suit.

WILLIAM.

A brown cloth suit.

SERVANT.

A suit of livery.

PEGGY.

First Dress. White frock.—Second dress, Blue coat, trousers, and white waistcoat.—Third dress. petticoat and veil like Alithea's.

ALITHEA.

Blue satin dress, trimmed with white lace.

LUCY.

Coloured gown, and white apron.

Persons Represented.

As Originally acted. Drury Lane, 1790.

<i>Moody</i>	Mr. Hart.	Mr. Wroughton.
<i>Harcourt</i>	Mr. Kynaston.	Mr. Barrymore.
<i>Sparkish</i>	Mr. Haynes.	Mr. Dodd.
<i>Belville</i>	Mr. Lydal.	Mr. Bannister.
<i>William</i>		Mr. Spencer.
<i>Countryman</i>		Mr. Jones.
<i>John</i>		Mr. Alfred.
<i>Miss Peggy</i>	Mrs. Bowtel.	Mrs. Jordan.
<i>Alitheu</i>	Mrs. James.	Mrs. Ward.
<i>Lucy</i>	Mrs. Cory.	Mrs. Wilson.



Drury Lane. Covent Garden.

<i>Moody</i>	Mr. Gattie.	Mr. Fawcett.
<i>Harcourt</i>	Mr. Wallack.	Mr. Barrymore.
<i>Sparkish</i>	Mr. Penley.	Mr. Farley.
<i>Belville</i>	Mr. Barnard.	Mr. Hamerton.
<i>William</i>	Mr. Maddocks.	Mr. Menage.
<i>Countryman</i>	Mr. Minton.	Mr. Howell.
<i>John</i>	Mr. Coveney.	Mr. W. Chapman.
<i>Miss Peggy</i>	Mrs. Mardyn.	Mrs. Alsop.
<i>Alithea</i>	Mrs. Orger.	Miss Matthews.
<i>Lucy</i>	Miss Tidswell.	Mrs. Gibbs.

SCENE—Lon don.

THE COUNTRY GIRL.

ACT I.

SCENE I,—*Harcourt's Lodgings.*

HARCOURT, L.H. and BELVILLE, R.H. *discovered sitting.*

Har. Ha, ha, ha ! and so you are in love, nephew ; not reasonably and gallantly, as a young gentleman ought, but sighingly, miserably so ; not content to be ankle-deep, you have sous'd over head and ears—ha, Dick ?

Bel. I am pretty much in that condition, indeed, uncle. *(Sighs.)*

Har. Nay, never blush at it : when I was of your age I was asham'd too ; but three years at college, and half a one at Paris, methinks should have cured you of that unfashionable weakness—modesty.

Bel. Could I have released myself from that, I had perhaps been at this instant happy in the possession of what I must despair now ever to obtain—Heigho !

Har. Ha, ha, ha ! very foolish indeed.

Bel. Don't laugh at me, uncle ; I am foolish, I know ; but, like other fools, I deserve to be pitied.

Har. Pr'ythee don't talk of pity; how can I help you? For this country girl of yours is certainly married.

Bel. No, no—I won't believe it; she is not married, nor she shan't be, if I can help it.

Har. Well said, modesty; with such a spirit you can help yourself, Dick, without my assistance.

Bel. But you must encourage and advise me too, or I shall never make any thing of it.

Har. Provided the girl is not married; for I never encourage young men to covet their neighbours' wives.

Bel. My heart assures me, that she is not married.

Har. O, to be sure, your heart is much to be relied upon; but to convince you that I have a fellow-feeling of your distress, and that I am as nearly allied to you in misfortunes as in relationship, you must know——

Bel. What, uncle? You alarm me!

Har. That I am in love too.

Bel. Indeed!

Har. Miserably in love.

Bel. That's charming.

Har. And my mistress is just going to be married to another.

Bel. Better and better.

Har. I knew my fellow-sufferings would please you; but now prepare for the wonderful wonder-of-wonders!

Bel. Well!

Har. My mistress is in the same house with yours.

Bel. What, are you in love with Peggy too?

(Rising from his Chair.)

Har. Well said, jealousy. No, no, set your heart at rest; your Peggy is too young, and too simple for me. I must have one a little more knowing, a little better bred, just old enough to see the difference between me and a coxcomb, spirit enough to break from a brother's engagements, and choose for herself.

Bel. You don't mean Alithea, who is to be married to Mr. Sparkish?

Har. Can't I be in love with a lady that is going to be married to another, as well as you, sir?

Bel. But Sparkish is your friend?

Har. Pr'ythee don't call him my friend; he can be nobody's friend, not even his own.—He would thrust himself into my acquaintance, would introduce me to his mistress, though I have told him again and again that I was in love with her; which, instead of ridding me of him, has made him only ten times more troublesome, and me really in love. He should suffer for his self-sufficiency.

Bel. 'Tis a conceited puppy!—And what success with the lady?

Har. No great hopes; and yet if I could defer the marriage a few days, I should not despair; her honour, I am confident, is her only attachment to my rival: she can't like Sparkish; and if I can work upon his credulity, a credulity which even popery would be ashamed of, I may yet have the chance of throwing sixes upon the dice to save me.

Bel. Nothing can save me.

Har. No, not if you whine and sigh, when you should be exerting every thing that is man about you. I have sent Sparkish, who is admitted at all hours in the house, to know how the land lies for you, and if she is not married already.

Bel. How cruel you are—you raise me up with one hand, and then knock me down with the other.

Har. Well, well, she shan't be married. (*Knocking at the Door, L.H.*) 'This is Sparkish, I suppose; dont drop the least hint of your passion to him; if you do, you may as well advertise it in the public papers.

Bel. I'll be careful.

Enter a Servant, L.H.D.

Serv. An odd sort of a person, from the country, I believe, who calls himself Moody, wants to see you, sir; but as I did not know him, I said you were not at home, but would return directly; "And so will I too," said he, very shortly and surlily! and away he went mumbling to himself.

Har. Very well, Will ; I'll see him when he comes. [*Exit, Servant, L.H.D.*] Moody call to see me !—He has something more in his head than making me a visit ; 'tis to complain of you, I suppose.

Bel. How can he know me ?

Har. We must suppose the worst, and be prepared for him ; tell me all you know of this ward of his, this Peggy—Peggy what's her name ?

Bel. Thrift, Thrift, uncle.

Har. Ay, ay, sir Thomas Thrift's daughter, of Hampshire ; and left very young, under the guardianship of my old companion and acquaintance, Jack Moody.

Bel. Your companion !—he's old enough to be your father.

Har. Thank you, nephew—he has greatly the advantage of me in years, as well as wisdom. When I first launched from the university, into this ocean of London, he was the greatest rake in it ; I knew him well for near two years, but all of a sudden he took a freak (a very prudent one) of retiring wholly into the country.

Bel. There he gain'd such an ascendancy over the odd disposition of his neighbour, sir Thomas, that he left him sole guardian to his daughter ; who forfeits half her fortune, if she does not marry with his consent—there's the devil, uncle.

Har. And are you so young, so foolish, and so much in love that you would take her with half her value ? Ha, nephew ?

Bel. I'll take her with any thing—with nothing.

Har. What ! such an unaccomplish'd, awkward, silly creature ? He has scarce taught her to write ; she has seen nobody to converse with, but the country people about 'em ; so she can do nothing but dangle her arms, look gawky, turn her toes in, and talk broad Hampshire.

Bel. Don't abuse her sweet simplicity ; had you but heard her talk, as I have done, from the garden-wall in the country, by moon-light——

Har. Romeo and Juliet, I protest, ha, ha, ha !
“ Arise fair sun, and kill the envious—” ha, ha, ha !
How often have you seen this fair Capulet ?

Bel. I saw her three times in the country, and spoke to her twice ; I have leap’d an orchard wall, like Romeo, to come at her ; played the balcony scene, from an old summer-house in the garden ; and if I lose her, I will find out an apothecary, and play the tomb scene too.

Har. Well said, Dick !—this spirit must produce something ; but has the old dragon ever caught you sighing at her ?

Bel. Never in the country ; he saw me yesterday kissing my hand to her, from the new tavern window that looks upon the back of his house, and immediately drove her from it, and fastened up the window-shutters.

Spark. (*Without, L.H.*) Very well, Will, I’ll go up to ’em.

Har. I hear Sparkish coming up ; take care of what I told you ; not a word of Peggy ; hear his intelligence, and make use of it, without seeming to mind it.

Bel. Mum, mum, uncle.

Enter SPARKISH, L.H.D.

Spark. O, my dear Harcourt, I shall die with laughing ; I have such news for thee—ha, ha, ha !—What, your nephew too, and a little dumpish, or so ; you have been giving him a lecture upon economy, I suppose—you, who never had any, can best describe the evils that arise from the want of it. I never mind my own affairs, not I—“ The gods take care of Cato.”—(*Crosses to Centre.*)—I hear, Mr. Belville, you have got a pretty snug house, with a bow-window that looks into the Park, and a back-door that goes out into it. Very convenient, and well-imagined—no young handsome fellow should be without one—you may be always ready there, like a spider in his web, to seize upon stray’d women of quality.

Har. As you used to do—you vain fellow you; pr'ythee don't teach my nephew your abandoned tricks; he is a modest young man, and you must not spoil him.

Spark. May be so, but his modesty has done some mischief at our house—my surly, jealous brother-in-law saw that modest young gentleman casting a wishful eye at his forbidden fruit, from the new tavern window.

Bel. You mistake the person, Mr. Sparkish; I don't know what young lady you mean.

Har. Explain yourself, Sparkish, you must mistake; Dick has never seen the girl.

Spark. I don't say he has; I only tell you what Moody says. Besides, he went to the tavern himself, and enquired of the waiter who dined in the back room, No. 4; and they told him it was Mr. Belville, your nephew; that's all I know of the matter, or desire to know of it, faith.

Har. He kiss'd his hand, indeed, to your lady, Alithea, and is more in love with her than you are, and very near as much as I am; so look about you, such a youth may be dangerous.

Spark. The more danger the more honour: I defy you both—win her and wear her if you can—Dolus an virtus in love as well as in war—though you must be expeditious, faith; for I believe, if I don't change my mind, I shall marry her to-morrow, or the day after.—Have you no honest clergyman, Harcourt, no fellow-collegian to recommend me, to do the business?

Har. Nothing ever, sure, was so lucky. (*Aside.*) Why, faith, I have, Sparkish; my brother, a twin-brother, Ned Harcourt, will be in town to-day, and proud to attend your commands.—I am a very generous rival, you see, to lend you my brother to marry the woman I love!

Spark. And so am I too, to let your brother come so near us—(*Crosses to R.H.*)—but Ned shall be the man; poor Alithea grows impatient; I can't put off the evil day any longer. I fancy the brute, her bro-

ther, has a mind to marry his country idiot at the same time.

Bel. How, country idiot, sir?

Har. Hold your tongue. (*Apart to Belville.*) I thought he had been married already.

Spark. No, no, he's not married, that's the joke of it.

Bel. No, no, he is not married.

Har. Hold your tongue— (*Elbowing Belville.*)

Spark. Not he—I have the finest story to tell you— (*Crosses to Centre.*)—by-the-by, he intends calling upon you, for he asked me where you lived, to complain of modesty there. He picked up an old raking acquaintance of his as we came along together, Will Frankly, who saw him with his girl, skulking and muffled up, at the play last night; he plagu'd him much about matrimony, and his being ashamed to show himself: swore he was in love with his wife, and intended to cuckold him. “Do you?” cried Moody, folding his arms, and scowling with his eyes thus—“You must have more wit than you used to have; besides, if you have as much as you think you have, I shall be out of your reach, and this profligate metropolis, in less than a week.”—Moody would fain have got rid of him, but the other held him by the sleeve, so I left 'em; rejoiced most luxuriously to see the poor devil tormented.

Bel. I thought you said, just now, that he was not married; is not that a contradiction, sir?

(*Harcourt still makes signs to Belville.*)

Spark. Why, it is a kind of one; but considering your modesty, and the ignorance of the young lady, you are pretty tolerably inquisitive, methinks; ha, Harcourt! ha, ha, ha!

Har. Pooh, pooh! don't talk to that boy, tell me all you know.

Spark. You must know, my booby of a brother-in-law hath brought up this ward of his (a good fortune let me tell you), as he coops up and fattens his chickens for his own eating; he is plaguy jealous of

her, and was very sorry that he could not marry her in the country, without coming up to town; which he could not do on account of some writings or other; so what does my gentleman? He persuades the poor silly girl, by breaking a sixpence, or some nonsense or another, that they are to all intents married in heaven; but that the laws require the signing of articles, and the church service to complete their union: so he has made her call him husband, and bud, which she constantly does; and he calls her wife, and gives out she is married, that she may not look after younger fellows, nor younger fellows after her, egad; ha, ha, ha! and all won't do. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Bel. Thank you, sir. What heavenly news, uncle!
(*Aside.*)

Har. What an idiot you are, nephew! (*Apart.*)
And so then you make but one trouble of it, and are both to be tack'd together the same day?

Spark. No, no, he can't be married this week; he damns the lawyers for keeping him in town;—besides, I am out of favour; and he is continually snarling at me, and abusing me for not being jealous. (*Knocking at the Door.*) There he is—I must not be seen with you, for he'll suspect something; I'll go with your nephew to his house, and we'll wait for you, and make a visit to my wife that is to be, and perhaps we shall show young modesty here a sight of Peggy too.

Enter a Servant, L.H.D.

Serv. Sir, here's the strange odd sort of a gentleman come again, and I have shown him into the fore-parlour.

Spark. That must be Moody! Well said, Will; an odd sort of a strange gentleman indeed; we'll step into the next room till he comes into this, and then you may have him all to yourself—much good may he

do you. (*Going, R.H.*) Remember that he is married, or he'll suspect me of betraying him.

[*Exeunt Sparkish and Belville, R.H.D.*]

Har. Show him up, Will. [*Exit Servant, L.H.D.*]
Now must I prepare myself to see a very strange, though a very natural metamorphosis; a once high-spirited, handsome, well-dress'd, raking prodigal of the town, sunk into a surly, suspicious, economical, country sloven.

Enter MOODY, L.H.D.

Moody. Mr. Harcourt, your humble servant: have you forgot me?

Har. What, my old friend, Jack Moody! by thy long absence from the town, the grumness of thy countenance, and the slovenliness of thy habit, I should give thee joy—you are certainly married.

Moody. My long stay in the country will excuse my dress, and I have a suit at law that brings me up to town, and puts me out of humour; besides, I must give Sparkish ten thousand pounds to-morrow to take my sister off my hands.

Har. Your sister is very much obliged to you: being so much older than her, you have taken upon you the authority of a father, and have engaged her to a coxcomb.

Moody. I have, and to oblige her: nothing but coxcombs or debauchees are the favourites now-a-days; and a coxcomb is rather the more innocent animal of the two.

Har. She has sense and taste, and can't like him; so you must answer for the consequences.

Moody. When she is out of my hands, her husband must look to the consequences. He's a fashionable fool, and will cut his horns kindly.

Har. And what is to secure your worship from consequences?—I did not expect marriage from such a rake—one that knew the town so well; fie, fie, Jack.

Moody. I'll tell you my security—I have married no London wife.

Har. That's all one; that grave circumspection in marrying a country wife, is like refusing a deceitful, pamper'd, Smithfield jade, to go and be cheated by a friend in the country.

Moody. I wish the devil had both him and his simile. (*Aside.*)

Har. Well, never grumble about it, what's done can't be undone. Is your wife handsome and young?

Moody. She has little beauty but her youth, nothing to brag of but her health, and no attraction but her modesty—wholesome, homely, and housewifely—that's all.

Har. You talk as like a grazier as you look, Jack.—Why did you not bring her to town before, to be taught some thing?

Moody. Which something I might repent as long as I live.

Har. But pr'ythee, why wouldst thou marry her, if she be ugly, ill-bred, and silly? She must be rich then?

Moody. As rich as if she had the wealth of the mogul. She'll not ruin her husband, like a London baggage, with a million of vices she never heard of: then, because she's ugly, she's the likelier to be my own; and being ill-bred, she'll hate conversation; and since silly and innocent, will not know the difference between me and you; that is, between a man of thirty, and one of forty.

Har. Fifty to my knowledge. (*Moody turns off, and grumbles.*)—But see how you and I differ, Jack—wit to me is more necessary than beauty: I think no young woman ugly that has it, and no handsome woman agreeable without it.

Moody. 'Tis my maxim—He's a fool that marries; but he's a greater that does not marry a fool.—I know the town, Mr. Harcourt; and my wife shall be virtuous in spite of you or your nephew.

Har. My nephew!—poor sheepish lad, he runs

away from every woman he sees : he saw your sister Alithea at the opera, and was much smitten with her ; he always toasts her, and hates the very name of Sparkish. I'll bring him to your house, and you shall see what a formidable Tarquin he is.

Moody. I have no curiosity, so give yourself no trouble.—You have heard of a wolf in sheep's clothing ; and I have seen your innocent nephew kissing his hands at my windows.

Har. At your sister, I suppose ; not at her unless he was tipsy. How can you, Jack, be so outrageously suspicious ? Sparkish has promised to introduce him to his mistress.

Moody. Sparkish is a fool, and may be what I'll take care not to be.—I confess my visit to you, Mr. Harcourt, was partly for old acquaintance sake, but chiefly to desire your nephew to confine his gallantries to the tavern, and not send 'em in looks, signs, or tokens, on the other side of the way. I keep no brothel ; so pray tell your nephew. (*Going, L.H.*)

Har. Nay, pr'ythee, Jack, leave me in better humour. Well, I'll tell him ; ha, ha, ha ! Poor Dick, how he'll stare. This will give him a reputation, and the girls won't laugh at him any longer. Shall we dine together at the tavern, and send for my nephew to chide him for his gallantry ? Ha, ha, ha ! we shall have fine sport.

Moody. I am not to be laugh'd out of my senses, Mr. Harcourt.—I was once a modest young gentleman myself ; and I never have been half so mischievous before or since, as I was in that state of innocence.—And so, old friend, make no ceremony with me ; I have much business, and you have much pleasure, and therefore, as I hate forms, I will excuse your returning my visit, or sending your nephew to satisfy me of his modesty—and so your servant. [*Exit, L.H.D.*]

Har. Ha, ha, ha ! poor Jack ! what a life of suspicion does he lead ! I pity the poor fellow, though he ought and will suffer for his folly—Folly !—'tis treason, murder, sacrilege ! When persons of a certain

age will indulge their false, ungenerous appetites, at the expense of a young creature's happiness, dame Nature will revenge herself upon them, for thwarting her most heavenly will and pleasure. [*Exit, R.H.D.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber in Moody's House.*

Enter PEGGY and ALITHEA, R.H.

Peggy. Pray, sister, where are the best fields and woods to walk in in London?

Ali. A pretty question! Why, sister, Vauxhall, Kensington Gardens, and St. James's Park, are the most frequented.

Peggy. Pray, sister, tell me why my bud looks so grum here in town, and keeps me up so close, and won't let me go a walking, nor let me wear my best gown yesterday?

Ali. O, he's jealous, sister!

Peggy. Jealous! what's that?

Ali. He's afraid you should love another man.

Peggy. How should he be afraid of my loving another man, when he will not let me see any but himself?

Ali. Did he not carry you yesterday to the play?

Peggy. Ay; but we sat amongst ugly people: he would not let me come near the gentry, who sat under us, so that I could not see 'em. He told me none but naughty women sat there; but I would have ventured for all that.

Ali. But how did you like the play?

Peggy. Indeed I was weary of the play; but I liked hugely the actors; they are the goodliest, properest men, sister.

Ali. O, but you must not like the actors, sister.

Peggy. Ay, how should I help it, sister? Pray,

sister, when my guardian comes in, will you ask leave for me to go a walking?

Ali. A walking! ha, ha, ha! Lord, a country gentlewoman's pleasure is the drudgery of a foot-post; and she requires as much airing as her husband's horses. (*Aside.*) But here comes my brother; I'll ask him, though I'm sure he'll not grant it.

Enter MOODY, L.H.

Peggy. O my dear, dear bud, welcome home; why dost thou look so fropish? Who has nager'd thee?

Moody. You're a fool

(*Peggy goes aside and cries.*)

Ali. Faith, and so she is for crying for no fault; poor tender creature!

Moody. What, would you have her as impudent as yourself; as arrant a girlfirt, a gadder, a magpie; and to say all, a mere notorious town woman!

Ali. Brother, you are my only censurer; and the honour of your family will sooner suffer in your wife that is to be, than in me, though I take the innocent liberty of the town!

Moody. Hark you, mistress! do not talk so before my wife: the innocent liberty of the town!

Ali. Pray, what ill people frequent my lodgings? I keep no company with any woman of scandalous reputation.

Moody. No, you keep the men of scandalous reputation company.

Ali. Would you not have me civil? Answer them at public places? Walk with them when they join me in the Park, Kensington Gardens, or Vauxhall?

Moody. Hold, hold; do not teach my wife where the men are to be found; I believe she's the worse for your town documents already. I bid you keep her in ignorance as I do.

Peggy. Indeed, be not angry with her, bud, she will tell me nothing of the town, though I ask her a thousand times a day.

Moody. Then you are very inquisitive to know, I find.

Peggy. Not I indeed, dear; I hate London: our place-house in the country is worth a thousand o't; would I were there again!

Moody. So you shall I warrant. But were you not talking of plays and players when I came in? You are her encourager in such discourses. (*To Alithea.*)

Peggy. No, indeed dear; she chid me just now for liking the player-men.

Moody. Nay, if she is so innocent as to own to me her liking them, there's no harm in't. (*Aside.*) Come, my poor rogue, but thou likest none better than me?

Peggy. Yes, indeed, but I do; the player men are finer folks.

Moody. But you love none better than me?

Peggy. You are my own dear bud, and I know you: I hate strangers.

Moody. Ay, my dear, you must love me only; and not be like the naughty town women, who only hate their husbands, and love every man else; love plays, visits, fine coaches, fine clothes, fiddies, balls, treats, and so lead a wicked town life.

Peggy. Nay, if to enjoy all these things be a town life, London is not so bad a place dear.

Moody. How! if you love me you must hate London.

Peggy. But, bud, do the town women love the player-men too?

Moody. Ay I warrant you.

Peggy. Ay, I warrant you.

Moody. Why, you do not I hope?

Peggy. No, no, bud; but why have we no player-men in the country?

Moody. Ha! Mrs. Minx, ask me no more to go to a play.

Peggy. Nay, why, love? I did not care for going; but when you forbid me, you make me as it were desire it. Pray let me go to a play, dear?

Moody. Hold your peace ; I won't,

Peggy. Why, love ?

Moody. Why, I'll tell you.

Peggy. Pray, why, dear ?

Moody. First, you like the actors : and the gallants may like you.

Peggy. What, a homely country girl ? No, bud, nobody will like me.

Moody. I tell you yes, they may.

Peggy. No, no, you jest—I won't believe you ; I will go.

Moody. I tell you then, that one of the most raking fellows in town, who saw you there, told me he was in love with you.

Peggy. Indeed : who, who, pray, who was't ?

Moody. I've gone too far, and slipt before I was aware. How overjoy'd she is ! (*Aside.*)

Peggy. Was it any Hampshire gallant ? any of our neighbours ?—'Promise you I am beholden to him.

Moody. I promise you, you lie ; for he would but ruin you, as he has done hundreds.

Peggy. Ay, but if he loves me, why should he ruin me ? Answer me to that. Methinks he should not ; I would do him no harm.

Ali. Ha, ha, ha !

Moody. 'Tis very well ; but I'll keep him from doing you any harm, or me either. But here comes company ; get you in, get you in.

Peggy. But pray, husband is he a pretty gentleman that loves me ?

Moody. In baggage, in. (*Thrusts her in, R.H.D. and shuts the Door.*) What, all the libertines of the town brought to my lodging by this easy coxcomb ! 'Sdeath, I'll not suffer it.

Enter SPARKISH, HARCOURT, and BELVILLE, L.H.

Spark. Here, Belville, do you approve my choice ?

Dear little rogue, I told you I'd bring you acquainted with all my friends, the wits. *(To Alithea.)*

Moody. Ay, they shall know her as well as you yourself will, I warrant you *(Aside.)*

Spark. This is one of those, my pretty rogue, that are to dance at your wedding to-morrow; and one you must make welcome; for he's modest. *(Belville crosses and salutes Alithea;—Har. does the same.)* Harcourt makes himself welcome, and has not the same foible, though of the same family.

Har. You are too obliging, Sparkish.

(Alithea and Sparkish retire up the stage.)

Moody. And so he is indeed. The fop's horns will as naturally sprout upon his brows as mushrooms upon dunghills. *(Aside.)*

Har. This, Mr. Moody, is my nephew you mentioned to me. I would bring him with me; for a sight of him will be sufficient, without poppy or mandragora to restore you to your rest.

(Joins Alithea and Sparkish.)

Bel. I am sorry, sir, that any mistake or imprudence of mine should have given you any uneasiness: it was not so intended, I assure you, sir.

Moody. It may be so, sir, but not the less criminal for that.—My wife, sir, must not be smirk'd and nodded at from tavern windows. I am a good shot, young gentleman, and don't suffer magpies to come near my cherries.

Bel. Was it your wife, sir?

Moody. What's that to you, sir? Suppose it were my grandmother?

Bel. I would not dare to offend her.—Permit me to say a word in private to you.

[Exeunt Moody and Bel. L.H.]

Spark. Now old surly is gone, tell me, Harcourt, if thou likest her as well as ever.—*(Crosses to centre.)* My dear, don't look down; I should hate to have a wife of mine out of countenance at any thing.

Ali. (R.H.) For shame, Mr. Sparkish!

Spark. Tell me, I say, Harcourt, how dost like her? Thou hast stared upon her enough to resolve me.

Har. (L.H.) So infinitely well, that I could wish I had a mistress too, that might differ from her in nothing but her love and engagement to you.

Ali. Sir, Mr. Sparkish has often told me that his acquaintance were all wits and railers; and now I find it.

Spark. No, by the universe, madam, he does not rally now; you may believe him. I do assure you he is the honestest, worthiest, truest-hearted gentleman; a man of such perfect honour, he would say nothing to a lady he does not mean.

Har. Sir, you are so beyond expectation obliging that—

Spark. Nay, 'egad, I am sure you do admire her extremely; I see it in your eyes.—He does admire you, madam; he has told me so a thousand and a thousand times; have you not, Harcourt? You do admire her, by the world, you do—don't you?

Har. Yes, above the world, or the most glorious part of it, her whole sex; and till now I never thought I should have envied you or any man about to marry; but you have the best excuse to marry I every knew.

Ali. Nay, now, sir, I am satisfied you are of the society of the wits and railers, since you cannot spare your friend, even when he is most civil to you; but the surest sign is, you are an enemy to marriage, the common butt of every railer.

Har. Truly, madam, I was never any enemy to marriage till now, because marriage was never an enemy to me before.

Ali. But why, sir, is marriage an enemy to you now? Because it robs you of your friend here? For you look upon a friend married as one gone into a monastery, that is dead to the world.

Har. 'Tis indeed because you marry him: I see, madam, you can guess my meaning.—I do confess heartily and openly, I wish it were in my power to break the match; by heavens I would.

Spark. Poor Frank!

Ali. Would you be so unkind to me?

Har. No, no, 'tis not because I would be unkind to you.

Spark. Poor Frank! No, 'egad, 'tis only his kindness to me.

Ali. Great kindness to you indeed!—Insensible! Let a man make love to his mistress to his face. (*Aside.*)

Spark. Come, dear Frank, for all my wife there, that shall be, thou shall enjoy my company sometimes, dear rogue.—By my honour, we men of wit condole for our deceased brother in marriage, as much as for one dead in earnest. I think that was prettily said of me, ha, Harcourt. Pr'ythee, Frank, dost think my wife that shall be, there, a fine person?

Har. I could gaze upon her till I became as blind as you are.

Spark. How as I am? How?

Har. Because you are a lover; and true lovers are blind.

Spark. True, true; but by the world she has wit too, as well as beauty. Go, go, with her into a corner, and try if she has wit; (*He puts Har. over to Ali.*) talk to her any thing, she's bashful before me—take her into a corner.

(*Har. courts Alithea aside, R.H.*)

Re-enter MOODY, L.H.

Moody. How, sir! If you are not concerned for the honour of a wife, I am for that of a sister.—Be a pander to your own wife, bring men to her, let 'em make love before your face, thrust them into a corner together, then leave 'em in private! Is this your town wit and conduct?

Spark. Ha, ha, ha! a silly, wise rogue would make one laugh more than a stark fool, ha, ha, ha! I shall burst. Nay, you shall not disturb 'em; I'll vex thee by the world. What have you done with Belville?

(*Struggles with Moody to keep him from Harcourt and Alithea.*)

Moody. Shown him the way out of my house, as you should to that gentleman.

Spark. Nay, but pr'ythee let me reason with thee.
(*Talks apart with Moody, L.H.*)

Ali. The writings are drawn, sir, settlements made: 'tis too late sir, and past all revocation.

Har. Then so is my death.

Ali. I would not be unjust to him.

Har. Then why to me so?

Ali. I have no obligations to you.

Har. My love.

Ali. I had his before.

Har. You never had it: he wants you see, jealousy, the only infallible sign of it.

Ali. Love proceeds from esteem. he cannot distrust my virtue; besides, he loves me, or he would not marry me.

Har. Marrying you is no more a sign of his love, than bribing your woman, that he may marry you is a sign of his generosity. But if you take marriage for a sign of love, take it from me immediately.

Ali. No, now you have put a scruple in my head.—But in short, sir, to end our dispute, I must marry him; my reputation would suffer in the world else.

Har. No: if you do marry him, with your pardon, madam, your reputation must suffer in the world.

Ali. Nay, now you are rude, sir.—Mr. Sparkish, pray come hither, your friend here is very troublesome and very loving.

Har. Hold, hold. (*Aside to Alithea.*)

Moody. D'ye hear that senseless puppy?

Spark. Why, d'ye think I'll seem jealous, like a country bumpkin?

Moody. No, rather be dishonour'd, like a credulous driveller.

(*They retire up the stage, L.H.*)

Har. Madam, you would not have been so little generous as to have told him?

Ali. Yes, since you could be so little generous as to wrong him.

Har. Wrong him! no man can do it; he's beneath

an injury : a bubble, a coward, a senseless idiot ; a wretch so contemptible to all the world but you, that—

Ali. Hold, do not rail at him ; for since he is like to be my husband, I am resolved to like him : nay I think I am obliged to tell him you are not his friend.—Mr. Sparkish ! Mr. Sparkish ! *(Crosses to him.)*

Spark. What, what ?—Now, dear rogue, has she not wit ?

Har. Not so much as I thought, and hoped she had. *(Surlily.)*

Ali. Mr. Sparkish, do you bring people to rail at you ?

Har. Madam !

Spark. How ? No ; but if he does rail at me, 'tis but in jest, I warrant : what we wits do for one another, and never take any notice of it.

Ali. He spoke so scurrilously of you, I had no patience to hear him.

Moody. And he was in the right on't.

Ali. Besides, he has been making love to me.

Moody. And I told the fool so.

Har. True, damn'd, tell tale woman. *(Aside.)*

Spark. Pshaw ! to show his parts ; we wits rail and make love often, but to show our parts : as we have no affections, so we have no malice ? We—

Moody. Did you ever hear such an ass ?

Ali. He said you were a wretch below an injury.

Spark. Pshaw !

Ali. A common bubble.

Spark. Pshaw !

Ali. A coward.

Spark. Pshaw ! pshaw !

Ali. A senseless, drivelling idiot.

Moody. True, true, true ; all true.

Spark. How ! did he disparage my parts ? Nay then, my honour's concerned. I can't put up that. Brother help me to kill him. *(Offers to draw.)*

Ali. Hold ! hold !

Moody. If Harcourt would but kill Sparkish, and run away with my sister, I should be rid of three plagues at once. *(Aside, L.H.)*

Ali. Indeed, to tell the truth, the gentleman said, after all, that what he spoke was but out of friendship to you.

Spark. How ! say I am a fool, that is no wit, out of friendship to me ?

Ali. Yes, to try whether I was concerned enough for you ; and made love to me only to be satisfied of my virtue, for your sake.

Har. Kind, however ! (*Aside.*)

Spark. Nay, if it were so, my dear rogue, I ask thee pardon ; but why would not you tell me so, 'faith ?

Har. Because I did not think on't, 'faith.

Spark. Come, Belville is gone away : Harcourt, let's be gone to the new play ; come, madam.

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Ali. I will not go, if you intend to leave me alone in the box, and run all about the house, as you used to do.

Spark. Pshaw ! I'll leave Harcourt with you in the box, to entertain you, and that's as good. If I sat in the box, I should be thought no critic. I must run about, my dear, and abuse the author. Come, away, Harcourt, lead her down. B'ye, brother.

(*Exeunt Harcourt, Sparkish, and Alithea, L.H.*)

Moody. B'ye, driveller. Well, go thy ways, for the flower of the true town fops ; such as spend their estates before they come to 'em, and are cuckolds before they're married. But let me go look to my freehold.

Enter a Countryman, L.H.

Country. Master, your worship's servant. Here is the lawyer, counsellor gentleman, with a green bag full of papers, come again, and would be glad to speak to you.

Moody. Nowhere's some other damn'd impediment, which the law has thrown in our way. I shall never marry the girl, nor get clear of the smoke and wickedness of this cursed town. (*Aside.*) Where is he ?

Country. He's below in a coach, with three other lawyers, counsellor gentlemen. [*Exeunt, L.H.*]

SCENE II.—*Another Chamber.*

Enter PEGGY and LUCY, R.H.

Lucy. What ails you, miss Peggy? You are grown quite melancholy.

Peggy. Would it not make any one melancholy to see your mistress Alithea go every day fluttering about abroad to plays and assemblies, and I know not what, whilst I must stay at home, like a poor, lonely, sullen bird in a cage?

Lucy. Dear miss Peggy, I thought you chose to be confined: I imagined that you had been bred so young to the cage, that you had no pleasure in flying about, and hopping in the open air, as other young ladies, who go a little wild about this town.

Peggy. Nay, I confess I was quiet enough, till somebody told me what pure lives the London ladies lead, with their dancing meetings, and junketings, and dress'd every day in their best gowns; and I warrant you play at nine-pins every day in the week, so they do.

Lucy. To be sure, miss, you will lead a better life when join'd in holy wedlock with your sweet-temper'd guardian, the cheerful Mr. Moody.

Peggy. I can't lead a worse, that's one good thing; but I must make the best of a bad market, for I can't marry nobody else.

Lucy. How so, miss? That's very strange.

Peggy. Why we have a contraction to one another; so we are as good as married, you know.

Lucy. I know it! Heaven forbid, miss.

Peggy. Heigho!

Lucy. Don't sigh, miss Peggy; if that young gentleman, who was here just now, would take pity on me, I'd throw such a contract as yours behind the fire.

Peggy. Lord bless us, how you talk!

Lucy. Young Mr. Belville would make you talk otherwise, if you knew him.

Peggy. Mr. Belville!—Where is he?—When did you see him?—You have undone me, Lucy; where was he? Did he say any thing?

Lucy. Say any thing!—very little indeed; he's quite distracted, poor young creature! He was talking with your guardian just now.

Peggy. The deuce he was!—but where was it, and when was it?

Lucy. In this house, five minutes ago, when your guardian turn'd you into your chamber, for fear of your being seen.

Peggy. I knew something was the matter, I was in such a fluster. But what did he say to my bud?

Lucy. What do you call him bud for? Bud means husband, and he is not your husband yet, and I hope never will be; and if he was my husband I'd bud him, a surly, unreasonable beast.

Peggy. I'd call him any names, to keep him in good humour; if he'd let me marry any body else (which I can't do), I'd call him husband as long as he lived.—But what said Mr. Belville to him?

Lucy. I don't know what he said to him, but I'll tell you what he said to me, with a sigh, and his hand upon his breast, as he went out of the door—"If you ever were in love, young gentlewoman (meaning me), and can pity a most faithful lover, tell the dear object of my affections——"

Peggy. Meaning me, Lucy?

Lucy. Yes, you, to be sure. "Tell the dear object of my affections, I live but upon the hopes that she is not married; and when those hopes leave me, she knows the rest;" then he cast up his eyes, thus—gnash'd his teeth—struck his forehead—would have spoke again, but he could not—fetch'd a deep sigh, and vanish'd.

Peggy. That is really very fine: I am sure it makes my heart sink within me, and brings tears into my eyes!

O, he's a charming sweet—But hush, hush, I hear my husband.

Lucy. Don't call him husband. Go into the Park this evening, if you can.

Peggy. Mum, mum.

Enter MOODY, L.H.

Moody. Come, what's here to do; you are putting the town pleasures in her head, and setting her a longing.

Lucy. Yes, after nine-pins; you suffer none to give her those longings but yourself.

Moody. Come, Mrs. Flippant, good precepts are lost when bad examples are still before us: the liberty your mistress takes abroad makes her hanker after it, and out of humour at home. Poor wretch! she desired not to come to London; I would bring her.

Lucy. O yes, you surfeit her with pleasures.

Moody. She has been this fortnight in town, and never desired, till this afternoon, to go abroad.

Lucy. Was she not at the play yesterday?

Moody. Yes, but she never ask'd me; I was myself the cause of her going.

Lucy. Then if she ask you again, you are the cause of her asking, and not my mistress.

Moody. Well, next week I shall be rid of you all, rid of this town, and my dreadful apprehensions. Come, be not melancholy, for thou shalt go into the country very soon, dearest.

Peggy. Pish! what d'ye tell me of the country for?

Moody. How's this? What, flout at the country?

Peggy. Let me alone, I am not well.

Moody. O, if that be all—what ails my dearest?

Peggy. Truly I don't know; but I have not been well since you told me there was a gallant at the play in love with me.

Moody. Ha!

Lucy. That's my mistress too.

Moody. Nay, if you are not well, but are so concern'd because a raking fellow chanced to lie, and say he liked you, you'll make me sick too.

Peggy. Of what sickness?

Moody. O, of that which is worse than the plague; jealousy!

Peggy. Pish! you jeer: I'm sure there's no such disease in your receipt-book at home.

Moody. No, you never met with it, poor innocent.

Peggy. Well, but pray, bud, let's go to a play to-night.

Moody. No, no; no more plays. But why are you so eager to see a play?

Peggy. Faith, dear, not that I care one pin for their talk there; but I like to look upon the player-men, and would see, if I could, the gallant you say loves me; that's all, dear bud.

Moody. Is that all, dear bud?

Lucy. (*Aside.*) This proceeds from my mistress's example.

Peggy. Let's go abroad, however, dear bud, if we don't go to the play.

Moody. Come, have a little patience, and thou shalt go into the country next week.

Peggy. Therefore I would first see some sights to tell my neighbours of: nay, I will go abroad, that's once.

Moody. What, you have put this into her head?

(*To Lucy.*)

Lucy. Heaven defend me, what suspicions! somebody has put more things into your head than you ought to have.

Moody. Your tongue runs too glibly, madam; and you have lived too long with a London lady, to be a proper companion for innocence. I am not over-fond of you, mistress.

Lucy. There's no love lost between us.

Moody. You admitted those gentlemen into the house, when I said I would not be at home; and there was the young fellow too who behaved so indecent to my wife at the tavern window.

Lucy. Because you would not let him see your handsome wife out of your lodgings.

Peggy. Why, O Lord, did the gentleman come hither to see me indeed?

Moody. No, no. You are not the cause of that damn'd question too? *(To Lucy.)*

Peggy. Come, pray, bud, let's go abroad before 'tis late: for I will go, that's flat and plain—only into the Park.

Moody. So! the obstinacy already of the town wife; and I must, while she's here, humour her like one.—*(Aside.)* How shall we do, that she may not be seen or known?

Lucy. Muffle her up with a bonnet and cloak, and I'll go with her to avoid suspicion.

Moody. No, no, I am obliged to you for your kindness, but she shan't stir without me.

Lucy. What will you do then?

Peggy. What shall we do? I am sick with staying at home: if I don't walk in the Park, I'll do nothing that I'm bid for a week—I won't be mop'd.

Lucy. O she has a charming spirit! I could stand your friend now, and would, if you had ever a civil word to give me. *(To Moody.)*

Moody. I'll give thee a better thing, I'll give thee a guinea for thy good advice, if I like it; and I can have the best of the college for the same money.

Lucy. I despise a bribe: when I am your friend, it shall be without fee or reward.

Peggy. Don't be long then, for I will go out.

Lucy. The tailor brought home last night the clothes you intend for a present to your godson in the country.

Peggy. You must not tell that, Lucy.

Lucy. But I will, madam. When you were with your lawyers last night, miss Peggy, to divert me and herself, put 'em on, and they fitted her to a hair.

Moody. Thank you, thank you, Lucy, 'tis the luckiest thought! Go this moment, Peggy, into your chamber, and put 'em on again—and you shall walk with me

into the Park, as my godson. Well thought of, Lucy; I shall love you for ever for this.

Peggy. And so shall I too, Lucy: I'll put 'em on directly. (*Going*) I suppose, bud, I must keep on my petticoats for fear of showing my legs?

Moody. No, no, you fool, never mind your legs.

[*Exeunt Peggy, and Lucy, R.H.D. Moody, L.H.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Park,*

Enter BELVILLE and HARCOURT, R.H.

Bel. And the moment Moody left me, I took an opportunity of conveying some tender sentiments through Lucy to miss Peggy; and here I am, in expectation of seeing my country goddess.

Har. And so to blind Moody, and take him off the scent of your passion for this girl, and at the same time to give me an opportunity with Sparkish's mistress (and of which I have made the most), you hinted to him with a grave melancholy face that you were dying for his sister—Gad-a-mercy, nephew! I will back thy modesty against any other in the three kingdoms: it will do, Dick.

Bel. What could I do, uncle?—It was my last stake, and I play'd for a great deal.

Har. You mistake me, Dick: I don't say you could do better, I only can't account for your modesty's doing so much: you have done such wonders, that I, who am rather bold than sheepish, have not yet ceased wondering at you. But do you think that you imposed upon him?

Bel. Faith, I can't say ; he said very little, grumbled much, shook his head, and showed me the door.—But what success have you had with Alithea ?

Har. Just enough to have a glimmering of hope, without having light enough to see an inch before my nose.—This day will produce something : Alithea is a woman of great honour, and will sacrifice her happiness to it, unless Sparkish's absurdity stands my friend, and does every thing that the fates ought to do for me.

Bel. Yonder comes the prince of coxcombs, and if your mistress and mine should, by chance, be tripping this way, this fellow will spoil sport : let us avoid him—you can't cheat him before his face.

Har. But I can though, thanks to my wit, and his want of it.

Bel. But you cannot come near his mistress but in his company.

Har. Still the better for me, nephew, for fools are most easily cheated, when they themselves are accessaries ; and he is to be bubbled of his mistress, or of his money (the common mistress), by keeping him company.

Enter. SPARKISH, R.H.

Spark. Who's that that is to be bubbled ? Faith, let me snack ; I han't met with a bubble since Christmas. 'Gad, I think bubbles like their brother woodcocks, go out with the cold weather.

Har. He did not hear all, I hope. (*Apart to Bel.*)

Spark. (*Crosses to Centre.*) Come you bubbling rogues, you, where do we sup ? O Harcourt, my mistress tells me you have made love, fierce love to her last night, all the play long ; ha, ha, ha !—but I—

Har. I make love to her ?

Spark. Nay, I forgive thee, and I know her ; but I am sure I know myself.

Bel. Do you, sir? Then you are the wisest man in the world, and I honour you as such. (*Bows.*)

Spark. O, your servant, sir: you are at your railleury, are you! You can't oblige me more; I'm your man: he'll meet with his match. Ha! Harcourt! did not you hear me laugh prodigiously at the play last night?

Har. Yes, and was very much disturb'd at it. You put the actors and audience into confusion, and all your friends out of countenance.

Spark. So much the better; I love confusion, and to see folks out of countenance; I was in tip-top spirits, faith, and said a thousand good things.

Bel. But I thought you had gone to plays to laugh at the poet's good things, and not at your own.

Spark. Your servant, sir; no, I thank you. 'Gad I go to a play as to a country treat: I carry my own wine to one, and my own wit to t'other, or else I'm sure I should not be merry at either; and the reason why we are so often louder than the players is, because we hate authors damnably.

Bel. But why should you hate the poor rogues? You have too much wit, and despise writing, I'm sure.

Spark. O yes, I despise writing; but women, women, that make men do all foolish things, make 'em write songs too. Every body does it; 'tis e'en as common with lovers, as playing with fans: and you can no more help rhyming to your Phillis, than drinking to your Phillis.

Har. But the poets damn'd your songs, did they?

Spark. Damn the poets: they turn'd them into burlesque as they call it: that burlesque is a hocus-pocus trick they have got, which, by the virtue of hiiccus-doccus, topsy-turvy, they make a clever witty thing absolute nonsense! Do you know, Harcourt, that they ridiculed my last song? "Twang, twang," the best I ever wrote.

Har. That may be, and be very easily ridiculed for all that.

Bel. Favour me with it, sir; I never heard it.

Spark. What, and have all the Park about us?

Har. Which you'll not dislike; and so, pr'ythee, begin.

Spark. I never am ask'd twice, and so have at you.

SONG.

*Tell me not of the roses and lilies
Which tinge the fair cheek of your Phillis;
Tell me not of the dimples and eyes,
For which silly Corydon dies.
Let all whining lovers go hang;
My heart would you hit,
Tip your arrow with wit,
And it comes to my heart with a twang, twang,
And it comes to my heart with a twang.*

(At the end of the Song Harcourt and Belville steal away L.H. U.E. from Sparkish, and leave him singing; he sinks his Voice by degrees at the surprise of their being gone.)

Re-enter HARCOURT and BELVILLE, L.H. U.E.

What the deuce did you go away for?

Har. Your mistress is coming.

Spark. The devil she is! O hide, hide me from her.
(Hides behind Harcourt.)

Har. She sees you.

Spark. But I will not see her; for I'm engaged, and
at this instant. *(Looking at his Watch.)*

Har. Pray first take me, and reconcile me to her.

Spark. Another time; faith, it is the lady, and one cannot make excuses to a woman.

Bel. You have need of'em I believe.

Spark. Pshaw, pr'ythee hide me.

*Enter MOODY, PEGGY, in Boy's Clothes, and
ALITHEA, L.H.*

Har. Your servant, Mr. Moody.

Moody. Come along. (To *Peggy*.)

Peggy. Lau! what a sweet delightful place this is!

Moody. Come along, I say, don't stare about you so; you'll betray yourself.

[*Exit Moody, pulling Peggy, Alithea following, R.H.*

Har. He does not know us.

Bel. Or he won't know us. (Crosses to R.H.)

Spark. So much the better.

[*Exit Belville after them, R.H.*

Har. Who is that pretty youth with him, Sparkish?

Spark. Some relation of *Peggy's*, I suppose; for he is something like her in face and gawkiness.

Re-enter BELVILLE, R.H.

Bel. By all my hopes, uncle, *Peggy* in boy's clothes. I am all over agitation. (*Apart to Harcourt.*)

Har. Be quiet, or you'll spoil all. They return.—*Alithea* has seen you, *Sparkish*, and will be angry if you don't go to her; besides, I would fain be reconciled to her, which none but you can do, my dear friend.

Spark. Well, that's a better reason, dear friend: I would not go near her now for her's or my own sake; but I can deny you nothing: for though I have known thee a great while, never go, if I do not love thee as well as a new acquaintance.

Har. I am obliged to you, indeed, my dear friend: I would be well with her, only to be well with thee still; for these ties to wives usually dissolve all ties to friends.

Spark. But they shan't though. Come along. (They retire, L.H.)

Re-enter MOODY, PEGGY, and ALITHEA, R.H.

Moody. Sister, if you will not go, we must leave you. (*To Alithea.*) The fool, her gallant, and she will muster up all the young saunterers of this place. What a swarm of cuckolds and cuckold-makers are here!

I begin to be uneasy. (*Aside.*) Come, let's be gone, Peggy.

Peggy. Don't you believe that ; I han't half my belly-full of sights yet.

Moody. Then walk this way.

Peggy. Lord, what a power of fine folks are here.— And Mr. Belville, as I hope to be married. (*Aside.*)

Moody. Come along ; what are you muttering at ?

Peggy. There's the young gentleman there, you were so angry about, that's in love with me.

Moody. No, no ; he's a dangler after your sister, or pretends to be ; but they are all bad alike. Come along, I say.

[*Moody pulls Peggy away. Exeunt Peggy and Moody, L H. Belville following. Sparkish, Harcourt, and Alithea come forward.*]

Spark. Come dear madam, for my sake you shall be reconciled to him.

Ali. For your sake I hate him.

Har. That's something too cruel, madam, to hate me for his sake.

Spark. Ay, indeed, madam, too cruel to me, to hate my friend for my sake.

Ali. I hate him because he is your enemy ; and you ought to hate him too, for making love to me, if you love me.

Spark. That's a good one ! I hate a man for loving you ? If he did love you, 'tis but what he can't help ; and 'tis your fault, not his, if he admires you.

Ali. Is it for your honour, or mine, to suffer a man to make love to me, who am to marry you to-morrow ?

Har. (*Crosses to Centre.*) But why, dearest madam, will you be more concerned for his honour than he is himself ? Let his honour alone, for my sake and his. He has no honour.

Spark. How's that ?

Har. But what my dear friend can guard himself ?

Spark. O ho—that's right again.

Ali. You astonish me, sir, with want of jealousy.

Spark. And you make me giddy, madam, with your

jealousy and fears, and virtue and honour. 'Gad, I see virtue makes a woman as troublesome as a little reading or learning.

Har. Come, madam, you see you strive in vain to make him jealous of me: my dear friend is the kindest creature in the world to me.

Spark. Poor fellow!

Har. But his kindness only is not enough for me, without your favour, your good opinion, dear madam: 'tis that must perfect my happiness. Good gentleman, he believes all I say: 'would you would do so!—Jealous of me! I would not wrong him nor you for the world.

Spark. Look you there: hear him, hear him, and not walk away so; come back again.

(Alithea walks carelessly to and fro.)

Har. I love you, madam, so—

Spark. How's that? Nay, now you begin to go too far indeed.

Har. So much, I confess I say I love you, that I would not have you miserable, and cast yourself away upon so unworthy and inconsiderable a thing as what you see here.

(Claps his Hand on his Breast, and points to Sparkish.)

Spark. No, faith, I believe thou wouldst not; now his meaning is plain; but I knew before thou wouldst not wrong me nor her.

Har. No, no, heaven forbid the glory of her sex should fall so low as into the embraces of such a contemptible wretch, the least of mankind—my dear friend here—I injure him.

(Embraces Sparkish.)

Ali. Very well.

Spark. No, no, dear friend, I knew it: madam, you see he will rather wrong himself than me in giving himself such names.

Ali. Do not you understand him yet?

Spark. Come, come, you shall stay till he has saluted you.

Re-enter MOODY and PEGGY, L.H. BELVILLE at a distance.

Moody. What, invite your wife to kiss men? Monstrous! Are you not ashamed?

Spark. Are you not ashamed that I should have more confidence in the chastity of your family than you have? You must not teach me: I am a man of honour, sir, though I am frank and free; I am frank, sir—

Moody. Very frank, sir, to share your wife with your friends.—You seem to be angry, and yet won't go.

(To Alithen.)

Ali. No impertinence shall drive me away.

Moody. Because you like it.—But you ought to blush at exposing your wife as you do. *(To Sparkish.)*

Spark. What then? It may be I have a pleasure in't as I have to show fine clothes at a play-house the first day, and count money before poor rogues.

Moody. He that shows his wife or money, will be in danger of having them borrowed sometimes.

Spark. I love to be envied, and would not marry a wife that I alone could love. Loving alone is as dull as eating alone; and so good night, for I must to Whitehall.—Madam, I hope you are now reconciled to my friend; and so I wish you a good night, madam, and sleep if you can; for to-morrow, you know, I must visit you early with a canonical gentleman. Good night, dear Harcourt—remember to send your brother.

[Exit, L.H.]

Har. You may depend upon me.—Madam, I hope you will not refuse my visit to-morrow, if it should be earlier, with a canonical gentleman, than Mr. Sparkish?

Moody. This gentlewoman is yet under my care, therefore you must yet forbear your freedom with her.

Har. Must, sir?

Moody. Yes, sir, she is my sister.

Har. 'Tis well she is, sir; for I must be her servant, sir.—Madam—

Moody. Come away, sister ; we had been gone if it had not been for you, and so avoided these lewd rake-hells, who seem to haunt us.

Har. I see a little time in the country makes a man turn wild and unsociable, and only fit to converse with his horses, dogs, and his herds.

Moody. I have business, sir, and must mind it: your business is pleasure ; therefore you and I must go different ways.

Har. Well, you may go on ; but this pretty young gentleman (*Takes hold of Peggy.*) shall stay with us ; for I suppose his business is the same with ours, pleasure.

Moody. 'Sdeath, he knows her, she carries it so silly ; yet if he does not, I should be more silly to discover it first. (*Aside.*) Come, come.

Har. Had you not rather stay with us ? (*To Peggy.*) Pr'ythee who is this pretty young fellow ?

(*To Moody.*)

Moody. One to whom I am guardian.—I wish I could keep her out of your hands. (*Aside.*)

Har. Who is he ? I never saw any thing so pretty in all my life.

Moody. Pshaw, do not look upon him so much ; he's a poor, bashful youth ; you'll put him out of countenance. (*Offers to take her away.*)

Har. Here, nephew, let me introduce this young gentleman to your acquaintance. You are very like, and of the same age, and should know one another. Salute him, Dick, à la Francoise

(*Belville kisses her.*)

Moody. I hate French fashions. Men kiss one another. (*Endeavours to take hold of her.*)

Peggy. I am out of my wits. (*Aside.*) What do you kiss me for ? I am no woman.

Har. But you are ten times handsomer.

Peggy. Nay, now you jeer one ; and pray don't jeer me.

Har. Kiss him again, Dick.

Moody. No, no, no;—come away, come away.

(*To Peggy.*)

Har. Why, what haste you are in! Why won't you let me talk with him?

Moody. Because you'll debauch him; he's yet young and innocent.—How she gazes upon him! The devil!
(*Aside.*) Come, pray let him go; I cannot stay fooling any longer: I tell you my wife stays supper for us.

Har. Does she? Come then, we'll all all go sup with her.

Moody. No, no; now I think on't, having staid so long for us, I warrant she's gone to bed.—I wish she and I were well out of your hands. (*Aside.*)

Har. Well then, if she be gone to bed, I wish her and you a good night. But pray, young gentleman, present my humble service to her.

Peggy. Thank you heartily, sir.

Moody. 'Sdeath, she will discover herself yet in spite of me. (*Aside.*)

Bel. And mine too, sir.

Peggy. That I will indeed. (*Bows.*)

Har. Pray give her this kiss for me.

(*Kisses Peggy.*)

Moody. O heavens! What do I suffer? (*Aside.*)

Bel. And this for me. (*Kisses Peggy.*)

Peggy. Thank you, sir.

[*Courtesies. Belville and Harcourt laugh, and Exeunt, L.H.*]

Moody. O the idiot!—Now 'tis out. Ten thousand cankers gnaw away their lips! (*Aside.*) Come, come, driveller. (*Moody, Peggy, and Alithea go out and return, L.H.*) So they are gone at last.—Sister, stay with Peggy, till I find my servant. Don't let her stir an inch: I'll be back directly. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Re-enter HARCOURT and BELVILLE, L.H.

Har. What, not gone yet?—Nephew, show the

young gentlemen Rosamond's pond, while I speak another word to this lady.

[*Exeunt Belville and Peggy, L.H. Alithea and Harcourt struggle.*]

Ali. My brother will go distracted.

Re-enter MOODY, R.H.

Moody. Where? how?—What's become of—gone!—whither?

Ali. In the next walk only, brother.

Moody. Only—only—where—where?

[*Exit hastily, L.H. S.E.*]

Har. What's the matter with him? Why so much concerned?—But, dearest madam—

Re-enter MOODY, L.H. S.E.

Moody. Gone, gone—not to be found—quite gone—ten thousand plagues go with 'em!—Which way went they?

Ali. But in t'other walk, brother.

Moody. T'other walk! t'other devil. Where are they, I say?

Ali. You are too abusive, brother.

Moody. You know where they are, you infamous wretch, eternal shame of your family; which you do not dishonour enough yourself, you think, but you must help her to do it too, thou legion of—

Ali. Good brother—

Moody. Damn'd, damn'd sister! [*Exeunt, R.H.*]

SCENE II.—*Another part of the Park.*

Enter BELVILLE and PEGGY, R.H.

Bel. No disguise could conceal you from my heart:—I pretended not to know you, that I might deceive the dragon that continually watches over you; but now he's asleep, let us fly from misery to happiness.

Peggy. Indeed, Mr. Belville, as well as I like you, I

can't think of going away with you so; and as much as I hate my guardian, I must take leave of him a little handsomely, or he will kill me, so he will.

Bel. But, dear miss Peggy, think of your situation; if we don't make the best use of this opportunity, we never may have another.

Peggy. Ay but, Mr. Belville, I am as good as married already; my guardian has contracted me, and there wants nothing but the church ceremony to make us one: I call him husband, and he calls me wife already; he made me do so: and we had been married in church long ago, if the writings could have been finished.

Bel. That's his deceit, my sweet creature.—He pretends to have married you, for fear of your liking any body else.—You have a right to choose for yourself; and there is no law in heaven or earth that binds you before marriage to a man you cannot like.

Peggy. I'fack, no more I believe it does: sister Althea's maid has told me as much. She's a very sensible girl.

Bel. You are in the very jaws of perdition, and nothing but running away can avoid it; the law will finish your chains to-morrow, and the church will rivet them the day after. Let us secure our happiness by escape, and love and fortune will do the rest for us.

Peggy. These are fine sayings, to be sure, Mr. Belville; but how shall we get my fortune out of bud's clutches? We must be a little cunning; 'tis worth trying for. We can at any time run away without it.

Bel. I see by your fears, my dear Peggy, that you live in awe of this brutal guardian; and if he has you once more in his possession, both you and your fortune are secured to him for ever.

Peggy. Ay, but it shan't though; I thank him for that.

Bel. If you marry without his consent, he can but

seize upon half your fortune.—The other half, and a younger-brother's fortune, with a treasure of love, are your own.—Take it, my sweetest Peggy, and this moment, or we shall be divided for ever.

(Kneels, and presses her hand.)

Peggy. I'fackins, but we won't.—Your fine talk has bewitched me.

Bel. (Rising.) 'Tis you have bewitch'd me, thou dear, enchanting, sweet simplicity!—Let us fly with the wings of love to my house there, and we shall be safe for ever.

Peggy. And so we will then.—There, squeeze my hand again.—Now run away with me; and if my guardy follows us, the devil take the hindmost, I say.

(Going, L.H.)

Enter MOODY, L.H. hastily, and meets them:

Moody. O' there's my stray'd sheep, and the wolf again in sheep's clothing!—Now I have recovered her, I shall come to my senses again. *(Aside.)* Where have you been, you puppy?

Peggy. Been, bud?—We have been hunting all over the Park to find you.

Bel. From one end to t'other, sir. *(Confusedly.)*

Moody. But not where I was to be found, you young devil you!—Why did you start when you saw me?

Peggy. I'm always frighten'd when I see you; and if I did not love you so well, I should run away from you; so I should. *(Pouts.)*

Moody. But I'll take care you don't.

Peggy. This gentleman has a favour to beg of you, bud? *(Belville makes signs of Dislike.)*

Moody. I am not in a humour to grant favours to young gentlemen, though you may. What have you been doing with this young lady—gentleman, I would say?

Peggy. Fie, bud, you have told all.

Bel. I have been as civil as I could to the young

stranger; and if you'll permit me, I will take the trouble off your hands, and show the young spark Rosamond's pond; for he has not seen it yet.—Come, pretty youth, will you go with me? (*Goes to her.*)

Peggy. As my guardian pleases.

Moody. No, no, it does not please me. Whatever I think he ought to see, I shall show him myself. You may visit Rosamond's pond, if you will; and the bottom of it, if you will.—And so, sir, your servant.

[*Exit Moody, with Peggy under his arm, L.H. Belville, R.H.*]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Moody's House.*

Enter LUCY and ALITHEA, R.H.

Ali. Hold your peace.

Lucy. Nay, madam, I will ask you the reason why you would banish poor Mr. Harcourt for ever from your sight? How could you be so hard-hearted.

Ali. 'Twas because I was not hard-hearted.

Lucy. No, no; 'twas stark love and madness, I warrant.

Ali. It was so; I would see him no more, because I love him.

Lucy. Hey-day! a very pretty reason.

Ali. You do not understand me.

Lucy. I wish you may yourself.

Ali. I was engaged to marry, you see, another man, whom my justice will not suffer me to deceive or injure.

Lucy. Can there be a greater cheat or wrong done to

a man, than to give him your person without your heart? I should make a conscience of it.

Ali. Hold your tongue.

Lucy. That you know I can't do, madam; and upon this occasion, I will talk for ever. What, give yourself away to one, that poor I, your maid, would not accept of.

Ali. How, Lucy?

Lucy. I would not, upon my honour, madam. 'Tis never too late to repent. Take a man, and give up your coxcomb, I say.

Enter a Servant, L.H.

Serv. Mr. Sparkish, with company, madam, attends you below.

Ali. I will wait upon 'em. [*Exit Servant, L.H.*] My heart begins to fail me, but I must go through with it. —Go with me, Lucy. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Lucy. Not I indeed, madam.—If you will leap the precipice, you shall fall by yourself. What excellent advice have I thrown away!—So I'll e'en take it where it will be more welcome.—Miss Peggy is bent upon mischief against her guardian, and she can't have a better privy-counsellor than myself.—I must be busy one way or another. [*Exit, L.H.*]

SCENE II.—*Another Chamber in Moody's House.*

Enter MOODY and PEGGY, L.H.

Moody. I saw him kiss your hand before you saw me. —This pretence of liking my sister was all a blind—the young abandon'd hypocrite! (*Aside.*) Tell me, I say—for I know he likes you, and was hurrying you to his house—tell me, I say——

Peggy. Lord, han't I told it a hundred times over?

Moody. I would try if, in the repetition of the ungrateful tale, I could find her altering it in the least ci-

cumstance ; for if her story is false, she is so too.—
(*Aside.*) Come, how was't, baggage ?

Peggy. Lord, what pleasure you take to hear it sure !

Moody. No, you take more in telling it, I find ; but speak, how was't ? No lies : I saw him kiss you ; he kiss'd you before my face.

Peggy. Nay, you need not be so angry with him neither ; for, to say the truth, he has the sweetest breath I ever knew.

Moody. The devil !—You were satisfied with it then, and would do it again ?

Peggy. Not unless he should force me.

Moody. Force you, changeling ?

Peggy. If I had struggled too much, you know, he would have known I had been a woman ; so I was quiet, for fear of being found out.

Moody. If you had been in petticoats, you would have knock'd him down !

Peggy. With what, bud ?——I could not help myself ; besides, he did it so modestly, and blush'd so, that I almost thought him a girl in men's clothes, and upon his mummerly too as well as me ; and if so, there was no harm done, you know

Moody. This is worse and worse. So 'tis plain she loves him, yet she has not love enough to make her conceal it from me ; but the sight of him will increase her aversion for me, and love for him ; and that love instruct her how to deceive me, and satisfy him, all idiot as she is. Love, 'twas he gave women first their craft, their art of deluding. I must strangle that little monster whilst I can deal with him.—
(*Aside.*) Go, fetch pen, ink, and paper, out of the next room.

Peggy. Yes, I will, bud.

Moody. Go then.

Peggy. I'm going.

Moody. Why don't you go then ?

Peggy. Lord, I'm going.

[*Exit, R.H.*

Moody. This young fellow loves her, and she loves

him ; the rest is all hypocrisy.—How the young modest villain endeavoured to deceive me ! But I'll crush this mischief in the shell.—Why should women have more invention in love than men ? It can only be because they have more desire, more soliciting passions, more of the devil.

Re-enter PEGGY, with Pen, Ink, and Paper, R.H.

Come, minx, sit down and write.

Peggy. Ay, dear, dear bud ; but I can't do't very well.

Moody. I wish you could not at all.

Peggy. But what should I write for ?

Moody. I'll have you write a letter to this young man.

Peggy. O Lord, to the young gentleman a letter ?—

Moody. Yes, to the young gentleman.

Peggy. Lord, you do but jeer ; sure you jest.

Moody. I am not so merry. Come, sit down, and write as I bid you.

Peggy. What, do you think I am a fool ?

Moody. She's afraid I would not dictate my love to him, therefore she's unwilling. (*Aside.*) But you had best begin.

Peggy. Indeed and indeed but I won't, so I won't.

Moody. Why ?

Peggy. Because he's in town. You may send for him here, if you will.

Moody. Very well, you would have him brought to you ? Is it come to this ? I say take the pen and ink, and write, or you'll provoke me.

Peggy. Lord, what do you make a fool of me for ?—Don't I know that letters are never writ but from the country to London, and from London into the country ? Now he's in town, and I'm in town too ; therefore I can't write to him, you know.

Moody. So, I'm glad it's no worse ; she is innocent enough yet. (*Aside.*) Yes, you may, when

your husband bids, write letters to people that are in town.

Peggy. O, may I so? Then I am satisfied.

Moody. Come, begin——*Sir——* (*Dictates.*)

Peggy. Shan't I say dear, sir? You know one says always something more than, bare, sir, up in a corner.

Moody. Write as I bid-you, or I will write something with this pen-knife in your face.

Peggy. *Sir——* (*Writes.*)

Moody. *Though I suffered last night your nauseous, loath'd kisses and embraces——* Write!

Peggy. Nay, why should I say so? you know I told you he had a sweet breath.

Moody. Write!

Peggy. Let me put out *loath'd*.

Moody. Write, I say!

Peggy. Well then. (*Writes.*)

Moody. Let me see what you have writ. (*Reads.*)

Though I suffered last night your kisses and embraces—— Thou impudent creature, where is *nauseous* and *loath'd*?

Peggy. I can't abide to write such filthy words.

Moody. Once more write as I'd have you, or I will spoil your writing with this; I will stab out those eyes that cause my mischief.

(*Holds up the Pen-knife.*)

Peggy. O Lord, I will. (*Writes.*)

Moody. So—so—let's see now:——*though I suffered last night your nauseous loath'd kisses and embraces——* go on——*yet I would not have you presume that you shall ever repeat them——* so——

(*Peggy writes.*)

Peggy. I have writ it.

Moody. O then——*I then conceal'd myself from your knowledge, to avoid your insolencies——*

(*Peggy writes.*)

Peggy. To avoid——

Moody. Your insolencies——

Peggy. Your insolencies.

(*Writes.*)

Moody. The same reason, now I am out of your hands—

Peggy. So—— (Writes.)

Moody. Makes me own to you my unfortunate—
though innocent frolic, in being in boy's clothes.

(Peggy writes.)

Peggy. So——

Moody. That you may for evermore——

Peggy. Evermore?

Moody. Evermore cease to pursue her who hates
and detests you—— (Peggy writes.)

Peggy. So—— (Sighs.)

Moody. What do you sigh for?——detests you
——as much as she loves her husband and her honour——

Peggy. I vow, husband, he'll ne'er believe I should
write such a letter. (Writes.)

Moody. What, he'd expect a kinder one from you?
Come, now your name only.

Peggy. What, shan't I say—your most faithful humble
servant till death?

Moody. No, tormenting fiend. (Peggy writes.)—
—Her style, I find, would be very soft. (Aside.)
Come, wrap it up now, whilst I go fetch wax and a candle,
and write on the outside—*For Mr. Belville.*

[Exit, L.H.]

Peggy. (Writes.) *For Mr. Belville.*—So—I am glad
he is gone——Hark, I hear a noise.

Moody. (Within.) Well, well, but can't you call
again——Well, walk in then.

Peggy. (Goes to L.H.D.) I fack there's folks with
him——

Moody. (Within.) Very well—if he must see me, I'll
come to him.

Peggy. That's pure; now I may think a little——
Why should I send dear Mr. Belville such a letter?—
Can one have no shift? Ah, a London woman would
have had a hundred presently.—Stay—what if I should
write a letter, and wrap it up like this, and write upon
it too?——Ay, but then my guardian would see't——

I don't know what to do——But yet y'vads I'll try, so I will—for I will not send this letter to poor Mr. Belville, come what will on't. (*Writes, and repeats what she writes*)—Dear, dear, dear, sweet Mr. Belville—so—My guardian would have me send you a base, rude letter, but I won't—so—and would have me say I hate you—but I won't——there——for I'm sure if you and I were in the country at cards together—so—I could not help treading on your toe under the table——so pray keep at home, for I shall be with you as soon as I can—so no more at present from one who am, dear, dear, poor dear Mr. Belville, your loving friend till death do us part, MARGARET THRIFT.——So——now wrap it up just like t'other—so—now write—For Mr. Belville.——But, oh! what shall I do with it? for here comes my guardian.

(*Puts it in her Bosom.*)

Re-enter MOODY, L.H. with a Candle and Sealing-wax.

Moody. I have been detained by a sparkish coxcomb, who pretended to visit me; but I fear 'twas to my wife. (*Aside.*) What, have you done?

Peggy. Ay, ay, bud, just now.

Moody. Let's see't; what d'ye tremble for?—

(*He opens and reads the first Letter.*)

Peggy. So, I had been finely serv'd if I had giv'n him this. (*Aside.*)

Moody. Come, where's the wax and seal?

Peggy. Lord, what shall I do? (*Aside.*) Pray let me see't. Lord, you think I cannot seal a letter; I will do't, so I will.

(*Snatches the Letter from him, changes it for the other, seals it, and delivers it to him.*)

Moody. Nay, I believe you will learn that and other things too, which I would not have you.

Peggy. So, han't I done it curiously? I think I have—there's my letter going to Mr. Belville, since he'll needs have me send letters to folks. (*Aside.*)

Moody. 'Tis very well ; but I warrant you would not have it go now ?

Peggy. Yes, indeed, but I would, bud, now.

Moody. Well, you are a good girl then. Come, let me lock you up in your chamber till I come back ; and be sure you come not within three strides of the window when I am gone, for I have a spy in the street. (*Puts her into the Chamber; R.H.D.*) At least 'tis fit she thinks so ; if we do not cheat women, they'll cheat us.—Now I have secur'd all within, I'll deal with the foe without, with false intelligence. [*Exit, L.H.*]

SCENE III.—*Belville's Lodgings.*

Enter LUCY and BELVILLE, R.H.

Lucy. I run great risks, to be sure, to serve the young lady and you, sir ; but I know you are a gentleman of honour, and would scorn to betray a friend who means you well, and is above being mercenary.

Bel. As you are not mercenary, Mrs. Lucy, I ought to be the more generous ; give me leave to present you with this trifle ; (*Gives her a Ring.*) not as a reward for your services, but as a small token of friendship.

Lucy. Though I scorn to be bribed in any cause, yet I am proud to accept it as a mark of your regard, and as such shall keep it for your sake—and now to business.

Bel. But has the dear creature resolved ?

Lucy. Has she : why she will run away and marry you, in spite of your teeth, the first moment she can break prison ; so you, in your turn must take care not to have your qualms ; I have known several bold gentlemen not able to draw their swords, when a challenge has come too quick upon 'em.

Bel. I assure you, Mrs. Lucy, that I am no bully in love ; and Miss Peggy will meet with her match, come when she will.

Lucy. Ay, so you all say : but talking does no business. Stay at home till you hear from us.

Bel. Blessings on thee, Lucy, for the thought.

Moody. (*Without, L.H.*) But I must and will see him, let him have what company he will.

Lucy. As I hope to be married, Mr. Belville, I hear Mr. Moody's voice. Where shall I hide myself?—If he sees me, we are all undone.

Bel. This is our cursed luck again. What the devil can he want here? Get into this closet till he is gone. (*Puts Lucy into the closet.*) Don't you stir, Lucy. I must put the best face upon the matter. Now for it. (*Takes a book and reads.*)

Enter MOODY, L.H.

Moody. You will excuse me, sir, for breaking through forms, and your servant's entreaties, to have the honour—but you are alone, sir—your fellow told me below, that you were with company.

Bel. Yes, sir, the best company. (*Shows his book.*) When I converse with my betters, I choose to have 'em alone.

Moody. And I chose to interrupt your conversation ! the business of my errand must plead my excuse.

Bel. You shall be always welcome to me ; but you seem ruffled, sir. What brings you hither, and so seemingly out of humour ?

Moody. Your impertinency—I beg pardon—your modesty I mean.

Bel. My impertinency !

Moody. Your impertinency !

Bel. Sir, from the peculiarity of your character, and your intimacy with my uncle, I shall allow you great privileges ; but you must consider youth has its privileges too : and as I have not the honour of your acquaintance, I am not obliged to bear with your ill humours, or your ill manners.

Moody. They who wrong me, young man, must

bear with both ; and if you had not made too free with me, I should have taken no liberties with you.

Bel. I could have wished, sir, to have found you a little more civil, the first time I have the honour of a visit from you.

Moody. If that is all you want, young gentleman, you will find me very civil indeed ! There, sir, read that, and let your modesty declare whether I want either kindness or civility. Look you there, sir.

(*Gives him a letter.*)

Bel. What is it ?

Moody. Only a love-letter, sir ; and from my wife.

Bel. How, is it from your wife ?—Hum and hum.

(*Reads.*)

Moody. Even from my wife, sir ; am not I wondrous kind and civil to you now too ? But you'll not think her so.

(*Aside.*)

Bel. Ha ! is this a trick of his or hers ?

(*Aside.*)

Moody. The gentleman's surpris'd I find ! What, you expected a kinder letter !

Bel. No faith not I : how could I ?

Moody. Yes, yes, I'm sure you did : a man so young and well made as you are, must needs be disappointed, if the women declare not their passion at the first sight or opportunity.

Bel. But what should this mean ? It seems he knows not what the letter contains.

(*Aside.*)

Moody. Come, ne'er wonder at it so much.

Bel. Faith, I can't help it.

Moody. Now, I think, I have deserv'd your infinite friendship and kindness ; and have show'd myself sufficiently an obliging kind friend and husband ; am I not so, to bring a letter from my wife to her gallant ?

Bel. Ay, indeed, you are the most obliging kind friend and husband in the world ; ha, ha, ha ! Pray, however, present my humble service to her, and tell her I will obey her letter to a tittle, and fulfil her desires, be what they will, or with what difficulty soever I do't : and you shall be no more jealous of me, I warrant her and you.

Moody. Well then, fare you well, and play with any man's honour but mine; kiss any man's wife but mine, and welcome—so, Mr. Modesty, your servant.

(*Going, L.H.*)

Enter SPARKISH, L.H. meeting him.

Spark. So brother-in-law that was to have been, I have follow'd you from home to Belville's: I have strange news for you.

Moody. What, are you wiser than you were this morning.

Spark. Faith, I don't know but I am, for I have lost your sister, and I shan't eat half an ounce the less at dinner for it; there's philosophy for you.

Moody. Insensibility you mean. I hope you don't mean to use my sister ill, sir?

Spark. No, sir, she has used me ill; she's in her tantrums; I have had a narrow escape, sir.

Moody. If thou art endow'd with the smallest portion of understanding, explain this riddle.

Bel. Ay, ay, pr'ythee, Sparkish, condescend to be intelligible.

Spark. Why you must know—we had settled to be married—it is the same thing to me whether I am married or not—I have no particular fancy one way or another, and so I told your sister; off or on, 'tis the same thing to me: but the thing was fix'd, you know—You and my aunt brought it about; I had no hand in it. And, to show you that I was as willing to marry your sister as any other woman, I suffered the law to tie me up to hard terms; and the church would have finish'd me still to harder—but she was taken with her tantrums!

Moody. Damn your tantrums, come to the point.

Spark. Your sister took an aversion to the parson, Frank Harcourt's brother—abused me like a pick-pocket, and swore 'twas Harcourt himself.

Moody. And so it was; for I saw him.

Spark. Why, you are as mad as your sister : I tell you it was Ned, Frank's twin brother.

Moody. What, Frank told you so ?

Spark. Ay, and Ned too ; they were both in a story.

Moody. What an incorrigible fellow !—Come, come, I must be gone.

Spark. Nay, nay, you shall hear my story out—
She walk'd up within pistol-shot of the church, then twirl'd round upon her heel, call'd me every name she could think of ; and when she had exhausted her imagination, and tired her tongue (no easy matter let me tell you), she call'd her chair, sent her footman to buy a monkey before my face, then bid me good morrow with a sneer, and left us with our mouths open in the middle of a hundred people, who were all laughing at us ! If these are not tantrums, I don't know what are.

Moody. Ha, ha, ha ! I thank thee, Sparkish, from my soul ; 'tis a most exquisite story ; I have not had such a laugh for this half year. Thou art a most ridiculous puppy, and I am infinitely obliged to thee ; ha, ha, ha !

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Spark. Did you ever hear the like, Belville ?

Bel. O yes ; how is it possible to hear such a foolish story, and see thy foolish face, and not laugh at 'em ? Ha, ha, ha !

(*Lucy in the closet laughs, R.H.*)

Spark. Hey-day ! what's that ? What have you raised a devil in the closet to make up a laughing chorus at me ? I must take a peep—

(*Going to the closet.*)

Bel. Indeed but you must not.

Spark. It was a woman's voice.

Bel. So much the better for me.

Spark. Pr'ythee introduce me.

Bel. Though you take a pleasure in exposing your ladies, I choose to conceal mine ; so, my dear Sparkish, lest the lady should be sick by too long a confinement, and laughing heartily at you, I must entreat you to withdraw. Pr'ythee excuse me, I must laugh—ha, ha, ha, ha !

Spark. Do you know that I begin to be angry, Belville ?

Bel. I can't help that—ha, ha, ha !

Spark. My character's at stake ; I shall be thought a damn'd silly fellow ; I will call Alithea to an account directly. [*Exit*, L.H.

Bel. Ha, ha, ha !

Lucy. (*Peeping out.*) Ha, ha, ha, ha ! O dear sir, let me have my laugh out, or I shall burst. What an adventure. (*Comes out, and laughs.*)

Bel. My sweet Peggy has sent me the kindest letter—and by the dragon himself ; there's a spirit for you !

Lucy. There's simplicity for you ! Show me a town-bred girl with half the genius—Send you a love-letter and by a jealous guardian too ! ha, ha, ha ! 'Tis too much—too much—Ha, ha, ha !—Well, Mr. Belville ! the world goes as it should do—my mistress will exchange her fool for a wit ; Miss Peggy her brute for a pretty young fellow : I shall dance at two weddings ; be well rewarded by both parties ; get a husband myself : and be as happy as the best of you : and so your humble servant. [*Exit*, L.H.

Bel. Success attend you, Lucy. [*Exit*, R.H.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Moody's House.*

PEGGY, discovered alone, leaning on her Elbow on a Table, with Pen, Ink, and Paper.

Peggy. Well, 'tis e'en so ; I have got the London disease they call love ; I am sick of my guardian, and dying for Mr. Belville ! I have heard this distemper call'd a fever, but methinks it is like an ague ; for when I think of my guardian, I tremble and am so cold ; but when I think of my gallant, dear Mr. Belville,

my hot fit comes, and I am all in a fever indeed. Ah! poor Mr. Belville! Well, I will not stay here; therefore I'll make an end of my letter to him, which shall be a finer letter than my last, because I have studied it like any thing. Oh! sick, sick!

Enter MOODY, M.D. who seeing her writing, steals softly behind her, and looking over her Shoulder.

Moody. What, (*Snatches the Paper from her.*) writing more letters?

Peggy. O Lord, bud! why d'ye fright me so?

(*She offers to run out; he stops her, and reads.*)

Moody. How's this! nay, you shall not stir, madam. (*Reads.*) Dear, dear, Mr. Belville—Very well, I have taught you to write letters to good purpose—but let's see't—First, I am to beg your pardon for my boldness in writing to you, which I'd have you to know I would not have done had you not said first you loved me so extremely; which if you do, you will never suffer me to be another man's, who I loath, nauseate and detest;—Now you can write these filthy words. But what follows?—therefore I hope you will speedily find some way to free me from this unfortunate match, which was never I assure you of my choice; but I'm afraid 'tis already too far gone; however, if you love me as I do you, you will try what you can do; you must help me away before to-morrow, or else, alas! I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our—our—what is to follow our?—Speak, what?—Our journey into the country, I suppose.—Oh, woman! damn'd woman! and love damn'd love! their old tempter; for this is one of his miracles; in a moment he can make those blind that could see, and those see that were blind; those dumb that could speak, and those prattle who were dumb before.—But make an end of your letter, and then I'll make an end of you thus, and all my plagues together. (*Draws his sword.*)

Peggy. O Lord ! O Lord ! you are such a passionate man, bud !

Moody. Come take the pen, and make an end of the letter, just as you intended ; if you are false in a tittle I shall soon perceive it, and punish you with this as you deserve. (*Lays his Hand on his sword.*)—write what was to follow—let's see—*You must make haste and help me away before to-morrow, or else I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our—what follows our?—*

(*Peggy takes the Pen, and writes.*)

Peggy. Must all out then, bud ?—Look you there then.

Moody. Let's see—for *I can defer no longer our wedding—Your slighted ALITHEA.*—What's the meaning of this ? My sister's name to't ? Speak ; unridle.

Peggy. Yes, indeed, bud.

Moody. But why her name to't ? Speak—speak, I say.

Peggy. Ay, but you'll tell her again ; if you would not tell her again—

Moody. I will not ; I am stunn'd ; my head turns round. Speak.

Peggy. Won't you tell her, indeed, and indeed.

Moody. No ; speak, I say.

Peggy. She'll be angry with me : but I would rather she should be angry with me than you, bud. And to tell the truth, 'twas she made me write the letter, and taught me what I should write.

Moody. Ha !—I thought the style was somewhat better than her own. (*Aside.*) Could she come to you to teach you, since I lock'd you up alone ?

Peggy. Oh, through the key-hole, bud.

Moody. But why should she make you write a letter for her to him, since she can write herself ?

Peggy. Why she said because—

Moody. Because what—because—

Peggy. Why because, bud—

Moody. Because what, I say ?

Peggy. Because, lest Mr. Belville, as he was so

young, should be inconstant, and refuse her; or be vain afterwards, and show the letter, she might disown it, the hand not being hers.

Moody. Belville again!—Am I to be deceiv'd again with that young hypocrite?

Peggy. You have deceiv'd yourself, bud; you have indeed. I have kept the secret for my sister's sake, as long as I could—but you must know it—and shall know it too. *(Cries.)*

Moody. Dry your tears.

Peggy. You always thought he was hankering after me—Good law! he's dying for Alithea, and Alithea for him; they have had private meetings; and he was making love to her before yesterday, from the tavern window, when you thought it was me. I would have discovered all, but she made me swear to deceive you; and so I have finely; have not I, bud?

Moody. Why did you write that foolish letter to him then, and make me more foolish to carry it?

Peggy. To carry on the joke, bud—to oblige them?

Moody. And will nothing serve her but that great baby?—He's too young for her to marry.

Peggy. Why do you marry me then?—'Tis the same thing, bud.

Moody. No, no, 'tis quite different. How innocent she is! *(Aside.)*—But hark you, madam, your sister went out this morning, and I have not seen her within since.

Peggy. Alack-a-day, she has been crying all day above, it seems, in a corner.

Moody. Where is she? let me speak with her.

Peggy. O Lord! then she'll discover all. *(Aside.)* Pray hold, bud: what, d'ye mean to discover me? She'll know I have told you then. Pray, bud, let me talk with her first.

Moody. I must speak with her to know whether Belville ever made her any promise, and whether she will be married to Sparkish or no.

Peggy. Pray, dear bud, don't till I have spoken with her, and told her that I have told you all; for she'll kill me else,

Moody. Go then, and bid her come to me.

Peggy. Yes, yes, bud.

Moody. Let me see—

Peggy. I have just got time to know of Lucy, who first set me to work, what lie I shall tell next; for I am e'en at my wits end. [*Aside, and Exit, R.H.D.*]

Moody. Well, I resolve it, Belville shall have her: I'd rather give him my sister than lend him my wife; and such an alliance will prevent his pretensions to my wife, sure; I'll make him of kin to her, and then he won't care for her.

Re-enter PEGGY, R.H.D.

Peggy. O Lord, bud, I told you what anger you would make me with my sister.

Moody. Won't she come?

Peggy. No, she won't, she's ashamed to look you in the face; she'll go directly to Mr. Belville, she says. Pray let her have her way, bud—she won't be pacified if you don't—and will never forgive me. For my part, bud, I believe, but don't tell any body, they have broken a piece of silver between 'em—or have contracted one another, as we have done, you know, which is the next thing to being married.

Moody. Pooh! you fool—she ashamed of talking with me about Belville, because I made the match for her with Sparkish! But Sparkish is a fool, and I have no objection to Belville's family or fortune—tell her so.

Peggy. I will, bud.

(*Going, R.H.*)

Moody. Stay, stay, Peggy, let her have her own way; she shall go to Belville herself, and I'll follow her—that will be best—let her have her whim.

Peggy. You're in the right, bud; for they have certainly had a quarrel, by her crying and hanging her head so: I'll be hang'd if her eyes an't swell'd out of her head, she's in such a piteous taking.

Moody. Belville shan't use her ill, I'll take care of that; if he has made her a promise, he shall keep to

to it: but she had better go first—I will follow her at a distance, that she may have no interruption; and I will wait in the Park before I see them, that they may come to a reconciliation before I come upon 'em.

Peggy. Law, bud, how wise you are!—I wish I had half your wisdom; you see every thing at once. Stand a one side then—there, a little further that way.

Moody. And so I will; she shan't see me till I break in upon her at Belville's. (*Sits down in the middle of the Stage.*)

Peggy. Now for it. [*Exit, R.H.D.*]

Moody. My 'case is something better; for suppose the worst—should Belville use her ill—I had rather fight him for not marrying my sister, than for debauching my wife, for I will make her mine absolutely to-morrow; and of the two, I had rather find my sister too forward than my wife; I expected no other from her free education, as she calls it, and her passion for the town. Well, wife and sister are names which make us expect love and duty, pleasure and comfort; but we find 'em plagues and torments, and are equally, though differently, troublesome to their keeper. But here she comes. (*Steps aside, R.H.*)

Re-enter Peggy, R.H.D. dressed like Alithea; and as she passes over the Stage, seems to sigh, sob, and wipe her eyes.

Peggy. Heigho! [*Exit. L.H.*]

Moody. (*Comes forward.*) There the poor devil goes, sighing and sobbing, a woeful example of the fatal consequences of a town education; but I am bound in duty, as well as inclination, to do my utmost to save her—but first I'll secure my own property.—(*Opens R.H.D. and calls.*)—Peggy! Peggy! my dear!—I will return as soon as possible—do you hear me? Why don't you answer? You may read in the book I bought you till I come back.—As the Jew says in the play, “Fast bind, fast find.” (*Locks the Door.*) This is the best, and only security for female affections.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

SCENE II.—*The Park, before Belville's House.*

Enter SPARKISH, fuddled, R.H.

Spark. If I can but meet with her, or any body that belongs to her, they will find me a match for 'em. When a man has wit, and a great deal of it, Champagne gives it a double edge, and nothing can withstand it—'tis a lighted match to gunpowder.—I was right to consult my friends, and they all agree with Moody, that I make a damn'd ridiculous figure, as matters stand at present. I'll consult Belville—this is his house—he's my friend too—and no fool—It shall be so. Damn it, I must not be ridiculous. (*Going to the Door, sees Peggy coming.*) Hold! hold! if the Champagne does not hurt my eye-sight, while it sharpens my wit, the enemy is marching up this way.—Come on, madam Alithea; now for a smart fire; and then let's see who will be ridiculous.

Enter PEGGY, R.H.

Peggy. Dear me, I begin to tremble; there is Mr. Sparkish, and I can't get to Mr. Belville's house without passing by him. He sees me, and will discover me; he seems in liquor too.—Bless me!

Spark. O ho! she stands at bay a little; she don't much relish the engagement. The first blow is half the battle. I'll be a little figurative with her. (*Aside—Approaches her.*) I find, madam, you like a solo better than a duet. You need not have been walking alone this evening, if you had been wiser yesterday.—What, nothing to say for yourself?—Repentance, I suppose, makes you as awkward and as foolish as the poor country girl your brother has lock'd up in Pall-mall.

Peggy. I'm frighten'd out of my wits.

(*Tries to pass him.*)

Spark. Not a step further shall you go till you give

me an account of your behaviour, and make me reparation for being ridiculous.—What, dumb still ! Then if you won't by fair means, I must squeeze you to a confession. (*As he goes to seize her, she slips by him ; but he catches hold of her before she reaches Belville's Door.*) Not quite so fast, if you please.—Come, come, let me see your modest face, and hear your soft tongue, or I shall be tempted to use you ill.

Enter MOODY, R.H.

Moody. Hands off, you ruffian ! How dare you use a lady, and my sister, in this manner ?

(*Takes Sparkish from her.*)

Spark. She's my property, sir ; transferred to me by you ; and though I would give her up to any body for a dirty sword-knot, yet I won't be bullied out of my right, though it is not worth that.—

(*Snaps his fingers.*)

Moody. There's a fellow to be a husband !—You are justified in despising him and flying from him. I'll defend you with my purse and my sword.—Knock at that door, and let me speak to Belville. (*Peggy knocks at D.F.L.H. ; when the footman opens it she runs in, L.H.*)—Is your master at home, friend ?

Foot. Yes, sir.

Moody. Tell him then that I have rescued that lady from this gentleman, and by her desire, and my consent, she flies to him for protection ; if he can get a parson, let him marry her this minute ; tell him so, and shut the door. [*Exit Footman, D.F.L.H.*] And now, sir, if your wine has given you courage, you had better show it upon this occasion ; for you are still damn'd ridiculous.

Spark. Did you ever hear the like ?—Lookye, Mr. Moody, we are in the Park, and to draw a sword is an offence to the court ; so you may vapour as long as you please. A woman of so little taste is not worth fighting for ; she's not worth my sword ! But if you'll

fight me to-morrow morning for diversion, I am your man.

Moody. Relinquish your title in the lady to Belville peaceably, and you may sleep in a whole skin.

Spark. Belville! he would not have your sister with the fortune of a nabob; no, no, his mouth waters at your country tit-bit at home; much good may it do him.

Moody. And you think so, puppy—ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Yes, I do, mastiff—ha, ha, ha!

Moody. Then thy folly is complete—ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Thine will be so, when thou hast married thy country innocent—ha, ha, ha!

(They laugh at each other.)

Re-enter HARCOURT, R.H.

Spark. What, my boy Harcourt!

Moody. What brings you here, sir?

Har. I followed you to Belville's to present a near relation of yours, and a nearer one of mine, to you.

[Exit, R.H.]

Spark. What's the matter now?

Re-enter HARCOURT, with ALITHEA, R.H.

Har. Give me leave, gentlemen, without offence to either, to present Mrs. Harcourt to you!

Spark. Alithea! your wife!—Mr. Moody, are you in the clouds too?

Moody. If I am not in a dream, I am the most miserable walking dog that ever run mad with his misfortunes and astonishment!

Har. Why so, Jack? Can you object to my happiness, when this gentleman was unworthy of it?

(Moody walks about in a rage.)

Spark. This is very fine, very fine indeed!—Where's your story about Belville now, 'squire Moody? Pr'y-thee don't chafe, and stare, and stride, and beat thy head, like a mad tragedy poet—but out with thy tropes and figures.

Moody. Zounds ! I can't bear it.

(Goes hastily to Belville's Door, and knocks hard.)

Ali. Dear brother, what's the matter ?

Moody. The devil's the matter ! the devil and women together. *(Knocks again.)* I'll break the door down, if they won't answer. *(Knocks again.)*

A Footman appears in the Balcony, in flat, L.H.

Foot. What would your honour please to have ?

Moody. Your master, rascal.

Foot. He is obeying your commands, sir ; and the moment he has finished, he will do himself the pleasure to wait on you.

Moody. You sneering villain you, if your master does not produce that she-devil, who is now with him, and who with a face of innocence, has cheated and undone me, I'll set fire to his house.

[Exit Footman from the Balcony.]

Spark. 'Gad so ! now I begin to smoke the business. Well said, simplicity, rural simplicity ! 'Egad ! if thou hast trick'd Cerberus here, I shall be so ravish'd that I will give this couple a wedding dinner. Pray, Mr. Moody, who's damn'd ridiculous now ?

Moody. *(Going to Sparkish.)* Look ye, sir—don't grin, for if you dare to show your teeth at my misfortunes, I'll dash 'em down your impudent throat, you jackanapes.

Spark. *(Quite calm.)* Very fine, faith—but I have no weapons to butt with a mad bull, so you may toss and roar by yourself, if you please.

Enter BELVILLE, in the Balcony.

Bel. What does my good friend want with me ?

Moody. Are you a villain, or are you not ?

Bel. I have obey'd your commands, sir.

Moody. What have you done with the girl, sir ?

Bel. Made her my wife, as you desired.

Spark. Very true, I am your witness—

Moody. She's my wife, and I demand her.

Enter PEGGY in the Balcony.

Peggy. No, but I an't though, bud.—What's the matter, dear, are you angry with me?

Moody. How dare you look me in the face, cockatrice?

Peggy. How dare you look me in the face, bud? Have you not given me to another, when you ought to have married me yourself? Have you not pretended to be married to me, when you knew in your conscience you was not? And have you not been shilly-shally for a long time? So that if I had not married dear Mr. Belville, I should not have married at all—so I should not.

(Belville and Peggy retire from the Balcony.)

Spark. Extremely pleasant, faith; ha, ha, ha!

Moody. I am stupified with shame, rage, and astonishment—my fate has o'ercome me—I can struggle no more with it. *(Sighs.)* What is left me?—I cannot bear to look, or be looked upon—I will hurry down to my old house, take a twelvemonths provision into it—cut down my drawbridge, run wild about my garden, which shall grow as wild as myself—then will I curse the world, and every individual in it—and when my rage and spirits fail me, I will be found dead among the nettles and thistles, a woeful example of the baseness and treachery of one sex, and of the falsehood, lying, perjury, deceit, impudence, and damnation of the other. *[Exit, L.H.]*

Spark. Very droll, and extravagantly comic, I must confess; ha, ha, ha!

Enter BELVILLE and PEGGY, from D.F.L.H.

Lookye, Belville, I wish you joy with all my heart—you have got the prize, and perhaps have caught a tartar—that's no business of mine—If you want evidence

for Mr. Moody's giving his consent to your marriage, I shall be ready. I bear no ill will to that pair : I wish you happy ; (*To Alithea and Harcourt.*)—though I'm sure they'll be miserable—and so your humble servant. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Peggy. I hope you forgive me, Alithea, for playing your brother this trick ; indeed I should have only made him and myself miserable, had we married together.

Ali. Then 'tis much better as it is. But I am yet in the dark how this matter has been brought about ; how your innocence, my dear, has outwitted his worldly wisdom.

Peggy. I am sure I'll do any thing to please my bud, but marry him.

But you, good gentry, what say you to this ?

You are to judge me—have I done amiss ?

I've reasons will convince you all, and strong ones :

Except old folks, who hanker after young ones ;

Bud was so passionate, and grown so thrifty !

'Twas a sad life—and then, he was near fifty !

I'm but nineteen—my husband too is young,

So soft, so gentle, such a winning tongue !

Have I, pray ladies, speak, done very wrong ?

As for poor bud, 'twas honest to deceive him !

More virtuous sure to cheat him than to grieve him.

Great folks, I know, will call me simple slut ;

“ Marry for love,” they cry, “ the country put ;”

Marriage with them's a fashion—soon grows cool ;

But I'm for always loving like a fool.

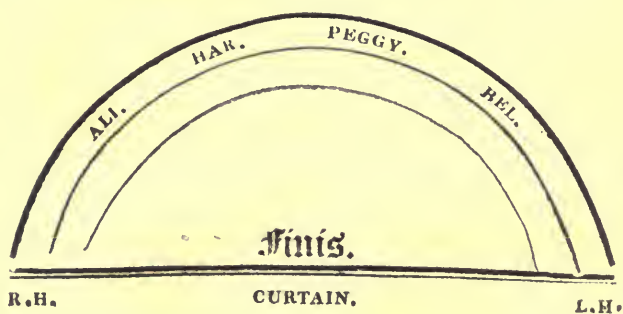
With half my fortune I would rather part,

Than be all finery with an aching heart.

For these strange awkward notions don't abuse me ;

And, as I know no better, pray excuse me.

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.



Oxberry's Edition.

JANE SHORE.

A

TRAGEDY;

By Nicholas Rowe.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED
WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

BY W. OXBERRY, Comedian.

London.

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Remarks.

JANE SHORE.

It is a rare felicity in any author to produce two tragedies which shall last their century. Rowe, the author of the *Fair Penitent*, and of *Jane Shore*, has attained this posthumous honour. It is curious to reflect in this respect on the disproportion between human wishes and their accomplishment. The aspiration of the mind is after the highest excellence, its longings are after immortality: its performance is generally as nothing; its triumph but for a moment!—How many matchless works have perished in embryo, even with the thought that gave them birth?—how many have fallen still-born from the press?—how many have been damned on their first appearance, “a sacrifice to grinning scorn and infamy?”—how many have lingered on a few nights, and then dropped into deathless oblivion, mocking their authors’ feverish hopes?—how many have been popular for a time, and then given place to others?—how few have remained, what all were designed to be?—heirs of universal praise, and the lasting ornament and delight of the public mind!—There are, it should seem, but two ways in which an author can hope to acquire this permanent reputation and influence, over the thoughts and feelings of others; either by the force and originality of his own conceptions, or by the warmth and vigour with which he enters into, and is able to express popular and obvious sentiments. The last of these appears to have been the *forte* of Rowe, in his tragic compositions; and is that which has given them so considerable and fixed a hold, over the minds of his countrymen. In writing for the stage, he does not seem to consult his own breast, or to consider what the parties themselves would have felt; but to give language to the thoughts that would be suggested on such an occasion, to the spectators.

His great object is stage-effect, and common sympathy ; and this he secures,—first, by the selection of a well-known, or perfectly intelligible story,—by striking situations and obvious sources of calamity ; and, secondly, by ingrafting on the tragic spectacle frequent and vehement exclamations of grief,—of wonder, of horror, &c. ; and general reflections of morality, such as are the offspring rather of speculative indifference, than of real passion. If to unlock and control the deeper and more powerful springs of thought and feeling is the highest proof of genius, yet to obtain the almost unlimited command over the more vulgar and superficial sympathy which is excited by well-placed shew and verbal declamation, is no mean nor easy task ; as may be seen, from the few who succeed in doing it with continued success. *Jane Shore* is a tragedy, the reputation of which is embalmed in the tears it has drawn from numberless eyes. The aggravated distress of the heroine, her reverse of fortune, her unmerited ill treatment by those she trusts, the attachment of her husband to her, (the motives of which we could only respect in her peculiar circumstances,) her boasted beauty of form, and her apparent patience and resignation of temper, certainly make an appeal to the affections which is not easily resisted. *Alicia* is not a very pleasant, though a very probable character ; and would hardly be endured in the virulence of her actions, and the extravagance of her speeches ; but that she meets with a triumphant foil in her more amiable, but not more fortunate friend. The mercenary generosity of *Hastings*, which is turned into sudden hatred on his meeting with an unexpected repulse to his amorous overtures, is well understood, and distinctly portrayed. *Gloster* is a character of considerable stateliness of deportment, and energy of purpose ; and would have a better effect, did we not compare it indirectly with the same character in *Shakspeare*. The incident of his coming into the council-chamber with his bared arm, and accusing *Hastings* of withering it up by sorcery, is literally taken from *Shakspeare* ; but luckily for *Rowe*, *Cibber* has left out this striking scene, in his alteration of *Richard the Third*. The language of *Rowe*, is often modelled on that of his great predecessor ; and is sometimes, even borrowed from *Scripture* :—so willing was our author to avail himself of any resources within his reach. His verse is smooth and equal, if not flowing or mellifluous ;

and is raised above prose, if it is not elevated into the highest strain of poetry. Perhaps, the chief character in this play has never been so well represented, as it was by Mrs. Siddons; and indeed, it requires the highest dignity of the human form and expression, to reconcile us completely to the exhibition of the last calamity of human nature,—the failure of life from the want of its common sustenance.

W. H.

Mr. Nicholas Rowe was born at Little Beckford, in Bedfordshire, in 1673; he was first sent to a private school at Highgate; and, being afterwards removed to Westminster, was at twelve years chosen one of the King's scholars. At sixteen he was entered a student of the Middle Temple. When he was nineteen, he was, by the death of his father, left more to his own direction, and probably from that time suffered law gradually to give way to poetry. At twenty-five he produced the "*Ambitious Step-mother*;" which was received with so much favour, that he devoted himself from that time wholly to elegant literature. He was willing enough to improve his fortune by other arts than poetry. He was Under-Secretary for three years when the duke of Queensberry was Secretary of State: and afterwards applied to the Earl of Oxford for some public employment. Oxford enjoined him to study Spanish; and when some time afterwards he came again, and said that he had mastered it, dismissed him with this congratulation, "Then, sir, I envy you the pleasure of reading *Don Quixote* in the original." At the accession of King George he was made Poet-laureat. In person he was graceful and well made, his face regular and of manly beauty.—He was master of most parts of polite learning, especially the classical authors, both Greek and Latin; understood the French, Italian and Spanish Languages, and spoke the first fluently, and the others tolerably well. He was twice married;—first to the daughter of a Mr. Parsons, one of the Auditors of the Revenue; and afterwards to a daughter of a Mr. Devenish, of a good family in Dorsetshire. By the first he had a son, and by the second a daughter. He died the sixth of December, 1718, in the forty-fifth year of his age, and was buried in Westminster Abbey:—His Dramatic Works are;—*The Ambitious Step Mother*, T.—*Tamerlane*, T.—*Fair Penitent*, T.—*The Biter*, C.—*Ulysses*, T.—*Royal Convert*, T.—*Jane Shore*, T.—and *Lady Jane Grey*, T.

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation, is two hours and thirty minutes. The first act occupies the space of thirty minutes;—the second, thirty-five;—the third, twenty;—the fourth, thirty-five;—the fifth, thirty. The half price commences, generally, at about a quarter before nine.

Stage Directions.

By R.H.....	is meant.....	Right Hand.
L.H.....		Left Hand.
S.E.....		Second Entrance.
U.E.....		Upper Entrance.
M.D.....		Middle Door.
D.F.....		Door in flat.
R.H.D.....		Right Hand Door.
L.H.D.....		Left Hand Door.

PROLOGUE.

To-night, if you have brought your good old taste,
We'll treat you with a downright English feast :
A tale, which, told long since in homely wise,
Hath never fail'd of melting gentle eyes.
Let no nice sir despise our hapless dame,
Because recording ballads chaunt her name ;
Those venerable ancient song-enditers
Soar'd many a pitch above our modern writers :
They caterwaul'd in no romantic ditty,
Sighing for Phillis', or Chloe's pity.
Justly they drew the fair, and spoke her plain,
And sung her by her christian name—'twas Jane.
Our numbers may be more refin'd than those,
But what we've gain'd in verse, we've lost in prose.
Their words no shuffling, double-meaning knew,
Their speech was homely, but their hearts were true.
In such an age, immortal Shakspeare wrote,
By no quaint rules, nor hampering critics taught ;
With rough majestic force he mov'd the heart,
And strength and nature made amends for art.
Our humble author does his steps pursue,
He owns he had the mighty bard in view ;
And in these scenes has made it more his care,
To rouse the passions, than to charm the ear.
Yet for those gentle beaux who love the chime,
The end of acts still gingle into rhyme.
The ladies, too, he hopes will not complain,
Here are some subjects for a softer strain,
A nymph forsaken, and a perjur'd swain.
What most he fears, is, lest the dames should frown,
The dames of wit and pleasure about town
To see our picture drawn, unlike their own.
But lest that error should provoke to fury
The hospitable hundreds of Old Drury,

PROLOGUE.

He bid me say, in our Jane Shore's defence,
She dol'd about the charitable pence,
Built hospitals, turn'd saint, and dy'd long since.
For her example, whatsoe'er we make it,
They have their choice to let alone or take it.
Though few, as I conceive, will think it meet,
To weep so sorely for a sin so sweet:
Or mourn and mortify the pleasant sense,
To rise in tragedy two ages hence.

}

Costume.

LORD HASTINGS.

Blue doublet, trunks, and cloak, trimmed with gold, black velvet hat, and white feathers.

DUKE OF GLOSTER.

A purple velvet doublet and trunks, crimson velvet robe, richly embroidered.

BELMOUR.

Grey dress trimmed with black.

RATCLIFFE.

Buff doublet and trunks, scarlet cloak, embroidered with silver.

CATESBY.

Light blue doublet and trunks, and cloak trimmed with silver.

SHORE.

First dress.—Slate coloured kerseymere.—Second dress.—Black velvet.

JANE SHORE.

First dress.—Grey satin Old English dress trimmed with point lace, and lined with black.—Second dress.—White muslin.

ALICIA.

First dress.—White satin, trimmed with beads and point lace.—Second dress.—Black velvet, and black crape veil.

Persons Represented.

As it was originally acted, 1713.

<i>Lord Hastings</i>	Mr. Booth.
<i>Duke of Gloster</i>	Mr. Cibber.
<i>Belmour</i>	Mr. Mills.
<i>Sir Richard Ratcliffe</i>	Mr. Bowman.
<i>Sir William Catesby</i>	Mr. Husband.
<i>Shore</i>	Mr. Wilkes.
<i>Jane Shore</i>	Mrs. Oldfield.
<i>Alicia</i>	Mrs. Porter.

	<i>Drury-lane.</i>	<i>Covent-garden.</i>
<i>Lord Hastings</i>	Mr. Rae.	Mr. Young.
<i>Duke of Gloster</i>	Mr. Bengough.	Mr. Egerton.
<i>Belmour</i>	Mr. Hamblin.	Mr. Claremont.
<i>Sir Richard Ratcliffe</i>	Mr. Marshall.	Mr. Treby.
<i>Sir William Catesby</i>	Mr. Ley.	Mr. Connor.
<i>Shore</i>	Mr. Holland.	Mr. Macready.
<i>Jane Shore</i>	Mrs. W. West.	Miss O'Neill.
<i>Alicia</i>	Mrs. Glover.	Mrs. Bunn.

Lords of the Council, &c.

JANE SHORE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Tower.*

Enter the DUKE of GLOSTER, SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE, and CATESBY, R.H.

Glos. Thus far success attends upon our councils,
And each event has answered to my wish;
The queen and all her upstart race are quell'd;
Dorset is banish'd, and her brother Rivers,
Ere this, lies shorter by the head at Pomfret.
The nobles have with joint concurrence, nam'd me
Protector of the realm; my brother's children,
Young Edward and the little York are lodg'd
Here, safe within the Tower. How say you, sirs,
Does not this business wear a lucky face?
The sceptre and the golden wreath of royalty
Seem hung within my reach.

Sir R. Then take 'em to you,
And wear them long and worthily: you are
The last remaining male of princely York;
(For Edward's boys, the state esteems not of 'em,)
And therefore on your sov'reignty and rule

The commonweal does her dependence make,
And leans upon your highness' able hand.

Cates. And yet to-morrow does the council meet
To fix a day for Edward's coronation.
Who can expound this riddle ?

Glos. That can I.

Those lords are each one my approv'd good friends,
Of special trust and nearness to my bosom ;
And howsoever busy they may seem,
And diligent to bustle in the state,
Their zeal goes on no further than we lead,
And at our bidding stays.

Cates. Yet there is one,
And he amongst the foremost in his power
Of whom I wish your highness were assur'd.
For me, perhaps it is my nature's fault,
I own I doubt of his inclining much.

Glos. I guess the man at whom your words would
point:

Hastings—

Cates. The same.

Glos. He bears me great good will.

Cates. 'Tis true, to you, as to the lord protector,
And Gloster's duke, he bows with lowly service :
But were he bid to cry, God save king Richard,
Then tell me in what terms he would reply.
Believe me, I have prov'd the man, and found him :
I know he bears a most religious reverence
To his dead master Edward's royal memory.
And whither that may lead him, is most plain.
Yet more—One of that stubborn sort he is,
Who, if they once grow fond of an opinion,
They call it honour, honesty, and faith,
And sooner part with life than let it go.

Glos. And yet this tough, impracticable heart,
Is govern'd by a dainty-finger'd girl ;
Such flaws are found in the most worthy natures ;
A laughing, toying, wheedling, whimpering she
Shall make him amble on a gossip's message,

And take the distaff with a hand as patient
As e'er did Hercules.

Sir R. The fair Alicia,
Of noble birth and exquisite of feature,
Has held him long a vassal to her beauty.

Cates. I fear he fails in his allegiance there ;
Or my intelligence is false, or else
The dame has been too lavish of her feast,
And fed him till he loathes.

Glos. No more, he comes.

Enter LORD HASTINGS, L.H.

Has. Health, and the happiness of many days,
Attend upon your grace.

Glos. My good lord Chamberlain,
We're much beholden to your gentle friendship.

Has. My lord, I come an humble suitor to you.

Glos. In right good time. Speak out your pleasure
freely.

Has. I am to move your highness in behalf
Of Shore's unhappy wife.

Glos. Say you, of Shore ?

Has. Once a bright star, that held her place on high:
The first and fairest of our English dames,
While Royal Edward held the sov'reign rule.
Now sunk in grief, and pining with despair,
Her waning form no longer shall incite
Envy in woman, or desire in man.
She never sees the sun, but through her tears,
And wakes to sigh the live-long night away.

Glos. Marry ! the times are badly chang'd with her,
From Edward's days to these. Then all was jollity,
Feasting and mirth, light wantonness and laughter,
Piping and playing, minstrelsy and masking ;
'Till life fled from us like an idle dream,
A show of mummary without a meaning.
My brother rest and pardon to his soul,
Is gone to his account ; for this his minion,
The revel-rout is done—But you were speaking

Concerning her—I have been told, that you
Are frequent in your visitation to her.

Has. No further, my good lord, than friendly pity,
And tender-hearted charity allow.

Glos. Go to : I did not mean to chide you for it.
For, sooth to say, I hold it noble in you
To cherish the distress'd—On with your tale.

Has. Thus it is gracious sir, that certain officers,
Using the warrant of your mighty name,
With insolence unjust, and lawless power,
Have seiz'd upon the lands, which late she held
By grant, from her great master Edward's bounty.

Glos. Somewhat of this, but slightly have I heard ;
And though some counsellors of forward zeal,
Some of most ceremonious sanctity,
And bearded wisdom, often have provok'd
The hand of justice to fall heavy on her ;
Yet still, in kind compassion of her weakness,
And tender memory of Edward's love,
I have withheld the merciless stern law
From doing outrage on her helpless beauty.

Has. Good heav'n, who renders mercy back for
mercy,

With open-handed bounty shall repay you :
This gentle deed shall fairly be set foremost,
To screen the wild escapes of lawless passion
And the long train of frailties flesh is heir to.

Glos. Thus far, the voice of pity pleaded only :
Our further and more full extent of grace
Is given to your request. Let her attend,
And to ourself deliver up her griefs.
She shall be heard with patience, and each wrong
At full redress'd. But I have other news,
Which much import us both ; for still my fortunes
Go hand in hand with yours ; our common foes,
The queen's relations, our new-fangled gentry,
Have fall'n their haughty crests—that for your privacy.

[*Exeunt*, R.H.]

SCENE II,—*An apartment in Jane Shore's House.**Enter BELMOUR, and DUMONT, L.H.*

Bel. How she has lived you have heard my tale
 already ;
 The rest your own attendance in her family,
 Where I have found the means this day to place you,
 And nearer observation, best will tell you.
 See with what sad and sober cheer she comes.

Enter JANE SHORE, R.H.

Sure, or I read her visage much amiss,
 Or grief besets her hard. Save you, fair lady,
 The blessings of the cheerful morn be on you,
 And greet your beauty with its opening sweets.

Jane S. My gentle neighbour ! your good wishes
 still

Pursue my hapless fortunes ; ah ! good Belmour !
 How few, like thee, inquire the wretched out,
 And court the offices of soft humanity.
 Like thee reserve their raiment for the naked,
 Reach out their bread to feed the crying orphan,
 Or mix their pitying tears with those that weep.
 Thy praise deserves a better tongue than mine,
 To speak and bless thy name. Is this the gentleman,
 Whose friendly service you commended to me ?

Bel. Madam, it is !

Jane S. A venerable aspect ! (*Aside.*)
 Age sits with decent grace upon his visage,
 And worthily becomes his silver locks ;
 He wears the marks of many years well spent,
 Of virtue, truth well try'd, and wise experience ;
 A friend like this would suit my sorrows well.

(*Crosses to Centre.*)

Fortune, I fear me, sir, has meant you ill, (*To Dum.*)
 Who pays your merit with that scanty pittance,
 Which my poor hand and humble roof can give.

But to supply those golden vantages,
Which elsewhere you might find, expect to meet
A just regard and value for your worth,
The welcome of a friend, and the free partnership
Of all that little good the world allows me.

Dum. You over-rate me much; and all my answer
Must be my future truth; let that speak for me,
And make up my deserving.

Jane S. Are you of England?

Dum. No, gracious lady, Flanders claims my birth:
At Antwerp has my constant biding been,
Where sometime I have known more plenteous days
Than these which now my failing age affords.

Jane S. Alas! at Antwerp! O forgive my tears!
(Weeping.)

They fall for my offences—and must fall
Long, long ere they shall wash my stains away.
You knew perhaps—O grief! O shame!—my husband.

Dum. I knew him well—but stay this flood of
anguish.

The senseless grave feels not your pious sorrows:
Three years and more are past, since I was bid,
With many of our common friends, to wait him
To his last peaceful mansion. I attended,
Sprinkled his clay-cold corse with holy drops,
According to our church's rev'rend rite,
And saw him laid, in hallow'd ground, to rest.

Jane S. Oh that my soul had known no joy but him!
That I had liv'd within his guiltless arms,
And dying slept in innocence beside him!
But now his honest dust abhors the fellowship,
And scorns to mix with mine.

Enter a SERVANT, L.H.

Ser. The lady Alicia
Attends your leisure.

Jane S. Say I wish to see her. [*Exit Servant, L.H.*
Please, gentle sir, one moment to retire,
I'll wait you on the instant, and inform you

Of each unhappy circumstance, in which
 Your friendly aid and counsel much may stead me.
[Bel. and Dum. cross and exeunt, R.H.]

Enter ALICIA, L.H.

Alic. Still my fair friend, still shall I find you thus?
 Still shall these sighs heave after one another,
 These trickling drops chase one another still,
 As if the posting messengers of grief
 Could overtake the hours fled far away,
 And make old time come back?

Jane S. No, my Alicia,
 Heaven and his saints be witness ^{to} my thoughts,
 There is no hour of all my life o'er past,
 That I could wish should take its turn again.

Alic. And yet some of those days my friend has
 known,
 Some of those years might pass for golden ones,
 At least if womankind can judge of happiness.
 What could we wish, we who delight in empire,
 Whose beauty is our sov'reign good, and gives us,
 Our reasons to rebel, and pow'r to reign,
 What could we more than to behold a monarch,
 Lovely, renown'd, a conqueror, and young,
 Bound in our chains, and sighing at our feet?

Jane S. 'Tis true, the royal Edward was a wonder,
 The goodly pride of all our English youth;
 He was the very joy of all that saw him.
 Form'd to delight, to love, and to persuade.
 But what had I to do with kings and courts?
 My humble lot had cast me far beneath him;
 And that he was the first of all mankind,
 The bravest, and most lovely was my curse.

Alic. Sure something more than fortune join'd your
 loves:
 Nor could his greatness, and his gracious form,
 Be elsewhere match'd so well, as to the sweetness
 And beauty of my friend.

Jane S. Name him no more:
 He was the bane and ruin of my peace.

This anguish, and these tears, these are the legacies
His fatal love has left me. Thou wilt see me,
Believe me, my Alicia, thou wilt see me,
Ere yet a few short days pass o'er my head,
Abandon'd to the very utmost wretchedness.
The hand of pow'r has seiz'd almost the whole
Of what was left for needy life's support ;
Shortly thou wilt behold me poor, and kneeling
Before thy charitable door for bread.

Alic. Joy of my life, my dearest Shore, forbear
To wound my heart with thy foreboding sorrows :
Raise thy sad soul to better hopes than these,
Lift up thy eyes, and let them shine once more,
Bright as the morning sun above the mist.
Exert thy charms, seek out the stern protector,
And sooth his savage temper with thy beauty ;
Spite of his deadly, unrelenting nature,
He shall be mov'd to pity, and redress thee.

Jane S. My form, alas ! has long forgot to please !
'The scene of beauty and delight is chang'd ;
No roses bloom upon my fading cheek,
Nor laughing graces wanton in my eyes ;
But haggard grief, lean-looking, sallow care,
And pining discontent, a rueful train,
Dwell on my brow, all hideous and forlorn ;
Onc only shadow of a hope is left me ;
The noble-minded Hastings, of his goodness,
Has kindly underta'en to be my advocate,
And move my humble suit to angry Gloster.

Alic. Does Hastings undertake to plead your cause ?
But wherefore should he not ? Hastings has eyes :
The gentle lord has a right tender heart,
Melting and easy, yielding to impression,
And catching the soft flame from each new beauty ;
But yours shall charm him long.

Jane S. Away, you flatterer ! *(Crosses to R.H.)*
Nor charge his gen'rous meaning with a weakness,
Which his great soul and virtue must disdain.
Too much of love thy hapless friend has prov'd,
Too many giddy, foolish hours are gone,

And in fantastic measures danc'd away :
 May the remaining few know only friendship,
 So thou, my dearest, truest, best Alicia,
 Vouchsafe to lodge me in thy gentle heart,
 A partner there ; I will give up mankind,
 Forget the transports of increasing passion,
 And all the pangs we feel for its decay.

Alic. Live ! live and reign for ever in my bosom ;
(Embracing.)

Safe and unrivall'd there possess thy own ;
 And you, the brightest of the stars above,
 Ye saints that once were women here below,
 Be witness of the truth, the holy friendship,
 Which here to this my other self I vow.
 If I not hold her nearer to my soul,
 Than every other joy the world can give,
 Let poverty, deformity, and shame,
 Distraction and despair seize me on earth,
 Let not my faithless ghost have peace hereafter,
 Nor taste the bliss of your celestial fellowship.

Jane S. Yes, thou art true, and only thou art true ;
 Therefore these jewels, once the lavish bounty
 Of royal Edward's love, I trust to thee ;
(Giving a Casket.)

Receive this, all that I can call my own,
 And let it rest unknown, and safe with thee :
 That if the state's injustice should oppress me,
 Strip me of all, and turn me out a wanderer,
 My wretchedness may find relief from thee,
 And shelter from the storm.

Alic. My all is thine ;
 One common hazard shall attend us both,
 And both be fortunate, or both be wretched.
 But let thy fearful doubting heart be still ;
 The saints and angels have thee in their charge,
 And all things shall be well. Think not, the good,
 The gentle deeds of mercy thou hast done,
 Shall die forgotten all ; the poor, the pris'ner,
 The fatherless, the friendless, and the widow,
 Who daily own the bounty of thy hand,

Shall cry to heav'n, and pull a blessing on thee.
 Ev'n man, the merciless insulter man,
 Man, who rejoices in our sex's weakness,
 Shall pity thee, and with unwonted goodness,
 Forget thy failings, and record thy praise.

Jane S. Why should I think that man will do for
 me,

What yet he never did for wretches like me?
 Mark by what partial justice we are judg'd;
 Such is the fate unhappy women find,
 And such the curse entail'd upon our kind,
 That man, the lawless libertine, may rove,
 Free and unquestion'd through the wilds of love;
 While woman, sense and nature's easy fool,
 If poor, weak woman swerve from virtue's rule;
 If, strongly charm'd, she leave the thorny way,
 And in the softer paths of pleasure stray,
 Ruin ensues, reproach and endless shame,
 And one false step entirely damns her fame;

(*Crosses to R.H.*)

In vain with tears the loss she may deplore,
 In vain look back on what she was before;
 She sets, like stars that fall, to rise no more.

[*Exeunt, R.H.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Jane Shore's House.*

Enter ALICIA, R.H.

The drowsy night grows on the world, and now
 The busy craftsmen and the o'er-labour'd hind
 Forget the travail of the day in sleep:
 Care only wakes, and moping pensiveness;

With meagre discontented looks they sit,
 And watch the wasting of the midnight taper.
 Such vigils must I keep, so wakes my soul,
 Restless and self-tormented ! O false Hastings !
 Thou hast destroy'd my peace.

(Knocking without, L.H.)

What noise is that ?
 What visitor is this, who with bold freedom,
 Breaks in upon the peaceful night and rest,
 With such a rude approach ?

Enter a SERVANT, L.H.

Serv. One from the court.
 Lord Hastings (as I think), demands my lady.
[Crosses behind, and Exit, R.H.]

Alic. Hastings ! Be still, my heart, and try to meet
 him,
 With his own arts ! with falsehood—But he comes.

Enter LORD HASTINGS, speaking to a Servant as entering, L.H.

Has. Dismiss my train, and wait alone without.
 Alicia here ! Unfortunate encounter
 But be it as it may.

Alic. When humbly, thus,
 The great descend to visit the afflicted,
 When thus, unmindful of their rest, they come
 To sooth the sorrows of the midnight mourner,
 Comfort comes with them ; like the golden sun,
 Dispels the sullen shades with her sweet influence,
 And cheers the melancholy house of care.

Has. 'Tis true I would not over-rate a courtesy,
 Nor let the coldness of delay hang on it,
 To nip and blast its favour, like a frost ;
 But rather chose, at this late hour, to come,
 That your fair friend may know I have prevail'd ;
 The lord protector has receiv'd her suit,
 And means to show her grace.

Alic. My friend ! my lord.

Has. Yes, lady, yours ; none has a right more ample

To task my pow'r than you.

Alic. I want the words,
To pay you back a compliment so courtly ;
But my heart guesses at the friendly meaning,
And wou'dn't die your debtor.

Has. 'Tis well, madam.
But I would see your friend.

Alic. O thou false lord !
I would be mistress of my heaving heart,
Stifle this rising rage, and learn from thee
To dress my face in easy, dull indiff'rence ;
But 'twou'dn't be ; my wrongs will tear their way,
And rush at once upon thee. *(Crosses to L.H.)*

Has. Are you wise ?
Have you the use of reason ? Do you wake ?
What means this raving, this transporting passion ?

Alic. O thou cool traitor ! thou insulting tyrant !
Dost thou behold my poor, distracted heart,
Thus rent with agonizing love and rage,
And ask me what it means ? Art thou not false ?
Am I not scorn'd, forsaken, and abandon'd ;
Left, like a common wretch, to shame and infamy ;
Giv'n up to be the sport of villains' tongues,
Of laughing parasites, and lewd buffoons ?
And all because my soul has doated on thee
With love, with truth, and tenderness unutterable !

Has. Are these the proofs of tenderness and love ?
These endless quarrels, discontents, and jealousies,
These never-ceasing wailings and complainings,
These furious starts, these whirlwinds of the soul,
Which every other moment rise to madness ?

Alic. What proof, alas ! have I not giv'n of love ?
What have I not abandon'd to thy arms ?
Have I not set at nought my noble birth,
A spotless fame, and an unblemish'd race,
'The peace of innocence, and pride of virtue ?
My prodigality has giv'n thee all ;

And now, I've nothing left me to bestow,
You hate the wretched bankrupt you have made.

(Crosses to R.H.)

Has. Why am I thus pursu'd from place to place,
Kept in the view, and cross'd at ev'ry turn?
In vain I fly, and, like a hunted deer,
Scud o'er the lawns, and hasten to the covert;
E'er I can reach my safety, you o'ertake me
With the swift malice of some keen reproach,
And drive the winged shaft deep in my heart.

Alic. Hither you fly, and here you seek repose;
Spite of the poor deceit, your arts are known,
Your pious, charitable, midnight visits.

Has. If you are wise, and prize your peace of mind,
Yet take the friendly counsel of my love;
Believe me true, nor listen to your jealousy.
Let not that devil, which undoes your sex,
That cursed curiosity seduce you,
To hunt for needless secrets, which, neglected,
Shall never hurt your quiet; but once known,
Shall sit upon your heart, pinch it with pain,
And banish the sweet sleep for ever from you.
Go to—be yet advis'd—

Alic. Dost thou in scorn
Preach patience to my rage, and bid me tamely
Sit like a poor, contented idiot down,
Nor dare to think thou'st wrong'd me? Ruin seize
thee,

And swift perdition overtake thy treachery.
Have I the least remaining cause to doubt?
Hast thou endeavour'd once to hide thy falsehood?
To hide it might have spoke some little tenderness,
And shown thee half unwilling to undo me:
But thou disdain'st the weakness of humanity.
Thy words, and all thy actions, have confess'd it;
Ev'n now thy eyes avow it, now they speak,
And insolently own the glorious villany.

Has. Well then, I own my heart has broke your
chains.
Patient I bore the painful bondage long,

At length my gen'rous love disdains your tyranny ;
 The bitterness and stings of taunting jealousy,
 Vexatious days, and jarring, joyless nights,
 Have driv'n him forth to seek some safer shelter,
 Where he may rest his weary wings in peace.

Alic. You triumph ! do ! and with gigantic pride
 Defy impending vengeance. Heav'n shall wink ;
 No more his arm shall roll the dreadful thunder,
 Nor send his lightnings forth : no more his justice
 Shall visit the presuming sons of men,
 But perjury, like thine, shall dwell in safety.

Has. Whate'er my fate decrees for me hereafter,
 Be present to me now, my better angel !
 Preserve me from the storm that threatens now,
 And if I have beyond atonement sinn'd,
 Let any other kind of plague o'ertake me,
 So I escape the fury of that tongue.

Alic. Thy prayer is heard—I go (*Crosses to L.H.*)
 —but know, proud lord,

Howe'er thou seorn'st the weakness of my sex,
 This feeble hand may find the means to reach thee,
 Howe'er sublime in pow'r and greatness plac'd,
 With royal favour guarded round and grac'd ;
 On eagle's wings my rage shall urge her flight,
 And hurl thee headlong from thy topmast height ;
 Then, like thy fate, superior will I sit,
 And view thee fall'n, and grov'ling at my feet ;
 See thy last breath with indignation go,
 And tread thee sinking to the shades below.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Has. How fierce a fiend is passion ! With what
 wildness,

What tyranny untam'd it reigns in woman !
 Unhappy sex ! whose easy, yielding temper
 Gives way to ev'ry appetite alike :
 And love in their weak bosoms is a rage
 As terrible as hate, and as destructive.
 But soft ye now—for here comes one, disclaims
 Strife and her wrangling train ; of equal elements,

Without one jarring atom was she form'd,
And gentleness and joy make up her being.

Enter JANE SHORE, R.H.

Forgive me, fair one, if officious friendship
Intrudes on your repose, and comes thus late
To greet you with the tidings of success.
The princely Gloster has vouchsaf'd your hearing,
To-morrow he expects you at the court ;
There plead your cause, with never-failing beauty,
Speak all your griefs, and find a full redress.

Jane S. Thus humbly let your lowly servant bend.
(*Kneeling.*)

Thus let me bow my grateful knee to earth,
And bless your noble nature for this goodness.

Has. Rise, gentle dame, you wrong my meaning
much,

Think me not guilty of a thought so vain,
To sell my courtesy for thanks like these.

Jane S. 'Tis true, your bounty is beyond my
speaking :

But though my mouth be dumb, my heart shall thank
you;

And when it melts before the throne of mercy,
Mourning and bleeding for my past offences,
My fervent soul shall breathe one pray'r for you,
That heav'n will pay you back, when most you need,
The grace and goodness you have shown to me.

Has. If there be aught of merit in my service,
Impute it there, where most 'tis due,—to love;
Be kind, my gentle mistress, to my wishes,
And satisfy my panting heart with beauty.

Jane S. Alas ! my lord—

Has. Why bend thy eyes to earth ?
Wherefore these looks of heaviness and sorrow ?
Why breathes that sigh, my love ? And wherefore
falls
This trickling show'r of tears, to stain thy sweet-
ness ?

Jane S. If pity dwells within your noble breast
(As sure it does), oh, speak not to me thus.

Has. Can I behold thee, and not speak of love?
Ev'n now, thus sadly as thou stand'st before me,
Thus desolate, dejected, and forlorn,
Thy softness steals upon my yielding senses,
Till my soul faints, and sickens with desire;
How canst thou give this motion to my heart,
And bid my tongue be still?

Jane S. Cast round your eyes
Upon the high-born beauties of the court;
Behold, like opening roses, where thy bloom,
Sweet to the sense, unsully'd all, and spotless;
There choose some worthy partner of your heart,
To fill your arms and bless your virtuous bed;
Nor turn your eyes this way.

Has. What means this peevish, this fantastic
change?
Where is thy wonted pleasantness of face,
Thy wonted graces, and thy dimpled smiles?
Where hast thou lost thy wit and sportive mirth?
That cheerful heart, which us'd to dance for ever,
And east a day of gladness all around thee?

Jane S. Yes, I will own I merit the reproach;
And for those foolish days of wanton pride,
My soul is justly humbled to the dust:
All tongues, like yours, are licens'd to upbraid me,
Still to repeat my guilt, to urge my infamy,
And treat me like that abject thing I have been.

Has. No more of this dull stuff. 'Tis time enough
To whine and mortify thyself with penance,
The present moment claims more gen'rous use;
Thy beauty, night and solitude reproach me,
For having talk'd thus long:—come let me press thee,
(*Laying hold on her.*)

Jane S. Forbear, my lord!—here let me rather die,
(*Kneeling.*)

And end my sorrows and my shame for ever.

Has. Away with this perverseness;—'tis too much.

Nay, if you strive,—'tis monstrous affectation!

(*Striving.*)

Jane S. Retire! I beg you leave me—

Has. Thus to coy it!—

With one who knows you too.—

Jane S. For mercy's sake—

Has. Ungrateful woman! Is it thus you pay
My services?—

Jane S. Abandon me to ruin,—

Rather than urge me—

Has. This way to your chamber; (*Pulling her.*)
There if you struggle—

Jane S. Help, O gracious heaven!
Help! Save me! Help! [*Rushes out, R.H.*]

Enter DUMONT, R.H.; he interposes.

Dum. My lord! for honour's sake—

Has. Hah! What art thou?—Be gone!

Dum. My duty calls me

To my attendance on my mistress here.

Has. Avaunt! base groom:—

At distance wait and know thy office better.

Dum. No, my lord—

The common ties of manhood call me now,
And bid me thus stand up in the defence
Of an oppress'd, unhappy, helpless woman.

Has. And dost thou know me, slave?

Dum. Yes, thou proud lord!

I know thee well; know thee with each advantage
Which wealth, or pow'r, or noble birth can give thee.
I know thee too for one who stains those honours,
And blots a long illustrious line of ancestry,
By poorly daring thus to wrong a woman.

Has. 'Tis wondrous well; I see, my saint-like dame,
You stand provided of your braves and ruffians,
To man your cause, and bluster in your brothel.

Dum. Take back the foul reproach, unmanner'd
railer!

Nor urge my rage too far, lest thou shouldst find

I have as daring spirits in my blood
 As thou or any of thy race e'er boasted ;
 And though no gaudy titles grac'd my birth,
 Yet heav'n that made me honest, made me more
 Than ever king did, when he made a lord.

Has. Insolent villain ! henceforth let this teach
 thee (*Draws and strikes him.*)

The distance 'twixt a peasant and a prince.

Dum. Nay then, my lord, (*Drawing.*) learn you by
 this, how well

An arm resolv'd can guard its master's life.

(*They fight ; Dumont disarms Hastings.*)

Has. Confusion ! baffled by a base-born hind !

Dum. Now, haughty sir, where is our difference
 now ?

Your life is in my hand, and did not honour,
 The gentleness of blood, and inborn virtue
 (Howe'er unworthy I may seem to you,)
 Plead in my bosom, I should take the forfeit.
 But wear your sword again ; and know, a lord
 Oppos'd against a man, is but a man.

Has. Curse on my failing hand ! your better fortune
 Has giv'n you vantage o'er me ; but perhaps
 Your triumph may be bought with dear repentance.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Re-enter JANE SHORE, R.H.

Jane S. Alas ! what have you done ? Know ye the
 pow'r,
 The mightiness that waits upon this lord ?

Dum. Fear not, my worthiest mistress ; 'tis a cause
 In which heaven's guards shall wait you. O pursue,
 Pursue the sacred counsels of your soul,
 Which urge you on to virtue ;
 - Assisting angels shall conduct your steps,
 Bring you to bliss, and crown your days with peace.

Jane S. O that my head were laid, my sad eyes
 clos'd,
 And my cold corse wound in my shroud to rest !

My painful heart will never cease to beat,
Will never know a moment's peace till then.

Dum. Would you be happy, leave this fatal place;
Fly from the court's pernicious neighbourhood;
Where innocence is sham'd, and blushing modesty
Is made the scorner's jest; where hate, deceit,
And deadly ruin, wear the masks of beauty,
And draw deluded fools with shows of pleasure.

Jane S. Where should I fly, thus helpless and forlorn,
Of friends, and all the means of life bereft?

Dum. Belmour, whose friendly care still wakes to
serve you,
Has found you out a little peaceful refuge,
Far from the court and the tumultuous city.
Within an ancient forest's ample verge,
There stands a lonely but a healthful dwelling,
Built for convenience and the use of life:
Around it fallows, meads, and pastures fair,
A little garden, and a limpid brook,
By nature's own contrivance seem'd dispos'd;
No neighbours, but a few poor simple clowns,
Honest and true, with a well meaning priest:
No faction, or domestic fury's rage,
Did e'er disturb the quiet of that place,
When the contending nobles shook the land
With York and Lancaster's disputed sway.
Your virtue there may find a safe retreat
From the insulting pow'rs of wicked greatness.

Jane S. Can there be so much happiness in store?
A cell like that is all my hopes aspire to.
Haste then, and thither let us take our flight,
E'er the clouds gather, and the wintry sky
Descends in storms to intercept our passage.

Dum. Will you then go? You glad my very soul.
Banish your fears, cast all your cares on me;
Plenty and ease, and peace of mind shall wait you,
And make your latter days of life most happy.
O lady! but I must not, cannot tell you,
How anxious I have been for all your dangers,

And how my heart rejoices at your safety.
So when the spring renews the flow'ry field,
And warns the pregnant nightingale to build,
She seeks the safest shelter of the wood,
Where she may trust her little tuneful brood ;
Where no rude swains her shady cell may know,
No serpents climb, nor blasting winds may blow ;
Fond of the chosen place, she views it o'er,
Sits there, and wanders through the grove no more ;
Warbling she charms it each returning night,
And loves it with a mother's dear delight.

[*Exeunt*, R.H.]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Court.*

Enter ALICIA, with a Paper, R.H.

Alic. This paper to the great protector's hand
With care and secrecy must be convey'd :
His bold ambition now avows its aim,
To pluck the crown from Edward's infant brow,
And fix it on his own. I know he holds
My faithless Hastings adverse to his hopes,
And much devoted to the orphan king :
On that I build ; this paper meets his doubts,
And marks my hated rival as the cause
Of Hastings' zeal for his dead master's sons.
Oh, jealousy ! thou bane of pleasing friendship,
How does thy rancour poison all our softness,
And turn our gentle nature's into bitterness !
See, where she comes ! once my heart's dearest blessing,
Now my chang'd eyes are blasted with her beauty,
Loath that known face, and sicken to behold her.

Enter JANE SHORE, L.H.

Jane S. O my Alicia !

Alic. What new grief is this ?

What unforeseen misfortune has surpris'd thee,
That racks thy tender heart thus ?

Jane S. O Dumont !

Alic. Say, what of him ?

Jane S. That friendly, honest man,
Whom Belmour brought of late to my assistance,
On whose kind care, whose diligence and faith,
My surest trust was built, this very morn
Was seiz'd on by the cruel hand of power,
Forc'd from my house, and borne away to prison.

Alic. To prison, said you ? Can you guess the
cause ?

Jane S. Too well, I fear. His bold defence of me
Has drawn the vengeance of lord Hastings on him.

Alic. Lord Hastings ! ha !

Jane S. Some fitter time must tell thee
The tale of my hard hap. Upon the present
Hang all my poor, my last remaining hopes.
Within this paper is my suit contain'd ;
Here as the princely Gloster passes forth,
I wait to give it on my humble knees,
And move him for redress.

*(She gives the paper to Alicia, who opens and seems
to read it ; Jane Shore retires up the Stage.)*

Alic. Now for a wile,

To sting my thoughtless rival to the heart ;
To blast her fatal beauties, and divide her
For ever from my perjur'd Hastings' eyes :
Their fashions are the same, it cannot fail.

(Aside.—Pulling out the other Paper.)

Jane S. (Advancing.) But see the great protector
comes this way.

Give me the paper, friend.

Alic. For love and vengeance !

(Aside.—She gives her the other Paper.)

*Enter the DUKE of GLOSTER, SIR RICHARD
RATCLIFF, CATESBY, Courtiers, and other
Attendants, R.H. U.E.*

Jane S. (Kneeling, R.H.) O noble Gloster, turn thy
gracious eye,
Incline thy pitying ear to my complaint ;
A poor, undone, forsaken, helpless woman,
Entreats a little bread for charity,
To feed her wants, and save her life from perishing.

Glos. Arise fair dame, and dry your wat'ry eyes.

(Receiving the Paper, and raising her.)

Beshrew me, but 'twere pity of his heart
That could refuse a boon to such a suitress.
You've got a noble friend to be your advocate :
A worthy and right gentle lord he is,
And to his trust most true. This present now
Some matters of the state detain our leisure ;
Those once dispatch'd, we'll call for you anon,
And give your griefs redress. Go to !—be comforted.

Jane S. Good heavens repay your highness for this
pity,

And show'r down blessings on your princely head !
Come, my Alicia, reach thy friendly arm,
And help me to support this feeble frame,
That nodding totters with oppressive woe,
And sinks beneath its load.

[Exeunt Jane S. and Alic. R.H.]

Glos. Now by my holidame !
Heavy of heart she seems, and sore afflicted.
But thus it is when rude calamity
Lays its strong gripe upon these mincing minions ;
The dainty gew-gaw forms dissolve at once,
And shiver at the shock. What says this paper ?

(Seeming to read.)

Ha ! What is this ? Come nearer, Ratcliffe ! Catesby !
Mark the contents, and then divine the meaning.

(He reads.)

Wonder not, Princely Gloster, at the notice

*This paper brings you from a friend unknown ;
 Lord Hastings is inclined to call you master,
 And kneel to Richard as to England's king ;
 But Shore's bewitching wife misleads his heart,
 And draws his service to king Edward's sons :
 Drive her away, you break the charm that holds him,
 And he, and all his powers, attend on you.*

Sir R. (R.H.) 'Tis wonderful !

*Cates. (L.H.) The means by which it came
 Yet stranger too !*

Glos. You saw it giv'n, but now.

Sir R. She could not know the purport.

*Glos. No, 'tis plain
 She knows it not, it levels at her life ;
 Should she presume to prate of such high matters,
 The meddling harlot, dear she should abide it.*

*Cates. What hand soe'er it comes from, be assur'd,
 It means your highness well—*

*Glos. Upon the instant,
 Lord Hastings will be here ; this morn I mean
 To prove him to the quick ; then if he flinch,
 No more but this,—away with him at once,
 He must be mine or nothing.—But he comes !
 Draw nearer this way, and observe me well.*

(They whisper.)

Enter LORD HASTINGS, L.H.

*Has. This foolish woman hangs about my heart,
 Lingers and wanders in my fancy still ;
 This coyness is put on, 'tis art and cunning,
 And worn to urge desire ;—I must possess her.
 The groom, who lift his saucy hand against me,
 Ere this, is humbled, and repents his daring.
 Perhaps, ev'n she may profit by th' example,
 And teach her beauty not to scorn my pow'r.*

Glos. This do, and wait me e'er the council sits.

[Exeunt Ratcliffe and Catesby, R.H. U.E.]

*My lord, you're well encounter'd ; here has been
 A fair petitioner this morning with us ;*

Believe me, she has won me much to pity her :
 Alas ! her gentle nature was not made
 To buffet with adversity. I told her
 How worthily her cause you had befriended ;
 How much for your good sake we meant to do,
 That you had spoke, and all things should be well.

Has. Your highness binds me ever to your service.

Glos. You know your friendship is most potent with
 us,

And shares our power. But of this enough,
 For we have other matters for your ear ;
 The state is out of tune : distracting fears,
 And jealous doubts, jar in our public councils ;
 Amidst the wealthy city, murmurs rise,
 Lewd railings, and reproach on those that rule,
 With open scorn of government ; hence credit,
 And public trust 'twixt man and man, are broke.
 The golden streams of commerce are withheld,
 Which fed the wants of needy hinds and artizans,
 Who therefore curse the great, and threat rebellion.

Has. The resty knaves are over-run with ease,
 As plenty ever is the nurse of faction ;
 If in good days, like these, the headstrong herd
 Grow madly wanton and repine, it is
 Because the reins of power are held too slack,
 And reverend authority of late
 Has worn a face of merey more than justice.

Glos. Beshrew my heart ! but you have well divin'd
 The source of these disorders. Who can wonder
 If riot and misrule o'erturn the realm,
 When the crown sits upon a baby brow ?
 Plainly to speak, hence comes the gen'ral cry,
 And sum of all complaint : 'twill ne'er be well
 With England (thus they talk,) while children govern.

Has. 'Tis true, the king is young : but what of
 that ?

We feel no want of Edward's riper years,
 While Gloster's valour and most princely wisdom
 So well support our infant sov'reign's place,
 His youth's support, and guardian to his throne.

Glos. The council (much I'm bound to thank 'em for't,)

Have plac'd a pageant sceptre in my hand,
Barren of pow'r, and subject to controul;
Scorn'd by my foes, and useless to my friends.
Oh, worthy lord! were mine thè rule indeed,
I think I should not suffer rank offence
At large to lord it in the commonweal;
Nor would the realm be rent by discord thus,
Thus fear and doubt, betwixt disputed titles.

Has. Of this I am to learn; as not supposing
A doubt like this;—

Glos. Ay, marry, but there is—
And that of much concern. Have you not heard
How, on a late occasion, doctor Shaw
Has mov'd the people much about the lawfulness
Of Edward's issue? By right grave authority
Of learning and religion, plainly proving,
A bastard scion never should be grafted
Upon a royal stock; from thence at full
Discoursing on my brother's former contract
To lady Elizabeth Lucy, long before
His jolly match with that same buxom widow,
The queen he left behind him—

Has. Ill befall
Such meddling priests, who kindle up confusion,
And vex the quiet world with their vain scruples!
By heav'n 'tis done in perfect spite to peace.
Did not the king
Our royal master, Edward, in concurrence
With his estates assembled, well determine
What course the sov'reign rule should take hencefor-
ward? *

When shall the deadly hate of faction cease?
When shall our long-divided land have rest,
If every peevish, moody malcontent,
Shall set the senseless rabble in an uproar,
Fright them with dangers, and perplex their brains,
Each day with some fantastic giddy change?

Glos. What if some patriot, for the public good,

Should vary from your scheme, new-mould the state?

Has. Curse on the innovating hand attempts it !
Remember him, the villain, righteous heaven,
In thy great day of vengeance ! blast the traitor
And his pernicious counsels ; who, for wealth
For pow'r, the pride of greatness, or revenge,
Would plunge his native land in civil wars !

Glos. You go too far, my lord.

Has. Your highness' pardon.—
Have we so soon forgot those days of ruin,
When York and Lancaster drew forth their battles ;
When, like a matron butcher'd by her sons,
Our groaning country bled at every vein :
When murders, rapes, and massacres prevail'd ;
When churches, palaces, and cities blaz'd ;
When insolence and barbarism triumph'd,
And swept away distinction : peasants trod
Upon the necks of nobles : low were laid
The reverend crosier and the holy mitre,
And desolation covered all the land ;
Who can remember this, and not, like me,
Here vow to sheath a dagger in his heart,
Whose damn'd ambition would renew those horrors,
And set once more that scene of blood before us ?

Glos. How now ! so hot !

Has. So brave, and so resolv'd.

Glos. Is then our friendship of so little moment,
That you could arm your hand against my life ?

Has. I hope your highness does not think I mean
it ;

No, heav'n forbend that e'er your princely person
Should come within the scope of my resentment.

Glos. O noble Hastings ! nay, I must embrace you ;
(*Embraces him.*)

By holy Paul, you're a right honest man !
The time is full of danger and distrust,
And warns us to be wary. Hold me not
Too apt for jealousy and light surmise,
If when I meant to lodge you next my heart,
I put your truth to trial. Keep your loyalty,

And live your king and country's best support :
 For me, I ask no more than honour gives,
 To think me yours, and rank me with your friends.

[*Exit*, R.H.]

Has. I am not read,
 Nor skill'd and practis'd in the arts of greatness,
 To kindle thus, and give a scope to passion.
 The duke is surely noble ; but he touch'd me
 Ev'n on the tend'rest point ; the master-string
 That makes most harmony or discord to me.
 I own the glorious subject fires my breast,
 And my soul's darling passion stands confess'd ;
 Beyond or love's or friendship's sacred band,
 Beyond myself, I prize my native land :
 On this foundation would I build my fame,
 And emulate the Greek and Roman name ;
 Think England's peace bought cheaply with my blood,
 And die with pleasure for my country's good.

[*Exit*, R.H.]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter DUKE of GLOSTER, (In Centre.) RATCLIFFE,
R.H. and CATESBY; L.H.

Glos. This was the sum of all : that he would
 brook
 No alteration in the present state.
 Marry, at last, the testy gentleman
 Was almost mov'd to bid us bold defiance :
 But there I dropp'd the argument, and changing
 The first design and purport of my speech,
 I prais'd his good affection to young Edward,
 And left him to believe my thoughts like his.

Proceed we then in this fore-mentioned matter,
As nothing bound or trusting to his friendship.

Sir R. Ill does it thus befall. I could have wish'd
This lord had stood with us.

His name had been of 'vantage to your highness,
And stood our present purpose much in stead.

Glos. This wayward and perverse declining from us,
Has warranted at full the friendly notice,
Which we this morn receiv'd. I hold it certain,
This puling, whining harlot rules his reason,
And prompts his zeal for Edward's bastard brood.

Cates. If she have such dominion o'er his heart,
And turn it at her will, you rule her fate ;
And should, by inference and apt deduction,
Be arbiter of his. Is not her bread,
The very means immediate to her being,
The bounty of your hand ? Why does she live,
If not to yield obedience to your pleasure,
To speak, to act, to think as you command !

Sir R. Let her instruct her tongue to bear your
message !

Teach every grace to smile in your behalf,
And her deluded eyes to gloat for you ;
His ductile reason will be wound about,
Be led and turn'd again, say and unsay,
Receive the yoke, and yield exact obedience.

Glos. Your counsel likes me well, it shall be follow'd,
She waits without attending, on her suit,
Go, call her in, and leave us here alone.

[*Exeunt Ratcliffe and Catesby, L.H.*

How poor a thing is he, how worthy scorn,
Who leaves the guidance of imperial manhood
To such a paltry piece of stuff as this is !
A moppet made of prettiness and pride ;
That oftener does her giddy fancies change,
Than glittering dew-drops in the sun do colours.—
Now, shame upon it ! was our reason given
For such a use ? To be thus puff'd about.
Sure there is something more than witchcraft in them,
That masters ev'n the wisest of us all.

Enter JANE SHORE, L.H.

Oh! you are come most fitly. We have ponder'd
On this your grievance: and though some there are,
Nay, and those great ones too, who would enforce
The rigour of our power to afflict you,
And bear a heavy hand; yet fear not you:
We've ta'en you to our favour; our protection
Shall stand between, and shield you from mishap.

Jane S. The blessings of a heart with anguish
broken

And rescu'd from despair, attend your highness.

Alas! my gracious lord, what have I done
To kindle such relentless wrath against me?

Glos. Marry, there are, though I believe them not,
Who say you meddle in affairs of state:
That you presume to prattle like a busy-body,
Give your advice, and teach the lords o'the council
What fits the order of the commonweal.

Jane S. Oh, that the busy world, at least in this,
Would take example from a wretch like me!
None then would waste their hours in foreign thoughts,
Forget themselves, and what concerns their peace,
To search, with prying eyes, for faults abroad,
If all, like me, consider'd their own hearts,
And wept their sorrows which they found at home.

Glos. Go to; I know your pow'r; and though I
trust not

To ev'ry breath of fame, I'm not to learn
That Hastings is profess'd your loving vassal.
But fair befall your beauty: use it wisely,
And it may stand your fortunes much in stead,
Give back your forfeit land with large increase,
And place you high in safety and in honour.
Nay, I could point a way, the which pursuing,
You shall not only bring yourself advantage,
But give the realm much worthy cause to thank you.

Jane S. Oh! where or how—can my unworthy
hand

Become an instrument of good to any ?
 Instruct your lowly slave, and let me fly
 To yield obedience to your dread command.

Glos. Why, that's well said ;—Thus then,—observe
 me well.

The state, for many high and potent reasons,
 Deeming my brother Edward's sons unfit
 For the imperial weight of England's crown—

Jane S. Alas ! for pity.

Glos. Therefore have resolv'd
 To set aside their unavailing infancy,
 And vest the sov'reign rule in abler hands.
 This, though of great importance to the public,
 Hastings, for very peevishness and spleen,
 Does stubbornly oppose.

Jane S. Does he ? Does Hastings ?

Glos. Ay, Hastings.

Jane S. Reward him for the noble deed, just
 heav'ns :

For this one action guard him and distinguish him
 With signal mercies, and with great deliverance,
 Save him from wrong, adversity, and shame,
 Let never fading honours flourish round him,
 And consecrate his name, ev'n to time's end.

Glos. How now !

Jane S. The poor, forsaken, royal little ones !
 Shall they be left a prey to savage power ?
 Can they lift up their harmless hands in vain,
 Or cry to heaven for help, and not be heard ?
 Impossible ! O gallant, generous Hastings,
 Go on, pursue, assert the sacred cause :
 Stand forth, thou proxy of all-ruling Providence,
 And save the friendless infants from oppression.
 Saints shall assist thee with prevailing prayers,
 And warring angels combat on thy side.

(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Glos. You're passing rich in this same heav'nly
 speech,
 And spend it at your pleasure. Nay, but mark me !
 My favour is not bought with words like these.

Go to :—you'll teach your tongue another tale.

Jane S. No, though the royal Edward has undone me,

He was my king, my gracious master still ;
 He lov'd me too, though 'twas a guilty flame ;
 And can I ?—O my heart abhors the thought !
 Stand by and see his children robb'd of right ?

Glos. Dare not, ev'n for thy soul, to thwart me further !

None of your arts, your feigning, and your foolery ;
 Your dainty squeamish coying it to me ;
 Go—'o your lord, your paramour, be gone !
 Lisp in his ear, hang wanton on his neck,
 And play your monkey gambols o'er to him.
 You know my purpose, look that you pursue it,
 And make him yield obedience to my will,
 Do it,—or woe upon the harlot's head.

Jane S. Oh that my tongue had every grace of speech,

Great and commanding, as the breath of kings ;
 That I had art and eloquence divine,
 To pay my duty to my master's ashes,
 And plead, till death, the cause of injur'd innocence.

Glos. Ha ! Dost thou brave me, minion ! Dost thou know

How vile, how very a wretch, my pow'r can make thee ?

That I can place thee in such abject state,
 As help shall never find thee ; where, repining,
 Thou shalt sit down, and gnaw the earth for anguish ;
 Groan to the pitiless winds without return :
 Howl, like the midnight wolf amidst the desert,
 And curse thy life, in bitterness and misery !

Jane S. Let me be branded for the public scorn,
 Turn'd forth and driv'n to wander like a vagabond,
 Be friendless and forsaken, seek my bread
 Upon the barren wild and desolate waste,
 Feed on my sighs, and drink my falling tears,
 E'er I consent to teach my lips injustice,
 Or wrong the orphan, who has none to save him.

Glos. 'Tis well :—we'll try the temper of your heart.
What, ho! Who waits without?

Enter RATCLIFFE, CATESBY, and Attendants, L.H.

Glos. Go, some of you, and turn this strumpet
forth!

Spurn her into the street; there let her perish,
And rot upon a dunghill. Through the city
See it proclaim'd, that none, on pain of death,
Presume to give her comfort, food, or harbour;
Who ministers the smallest comfort, dies.
Her house, her costly furniture and wealth,
We seize on, for the profit of the state.
Away! Be gone!

Jane S. Oh, thou most righteous Judge—
Humbly behold, I bow myself to thee, (*Kneels.*)
And own thy justice in this hard decree:
No longer, then, my ripe offences spare,
But what I merit, let me learn to bear.
Yet, since 'tis all my wretchedness can give,
For my past crimes my forfeit life receive;

(*They raise her.*)

No pity for my sufferings here I crave,
And only hope forgiveness in the grave.

[*Exit Jane Shore, guarded by Catesby, L.H.*]

Glos. So much for this. Your project's at an end.
(*To Sir Richard.*)

This idle toy, this hilding scorns my power,
And sets us all at nought. See that a guard
Be ready at my call—

Sir R. The council waits
Upon your highness's leisure.

Glos. I'll attend them. [*Exeunt, L.H.*]

SCENE II.—*The Council Chamber.*

*The DUKE of BUCKINGHAM, EARL of DERBY, BISHOP
of ELY, LORD HASTINGS, and others, discovered
in Council. The DUKE of GLOSTER enters, L.H.
and takes his Place at the upper End.*

Der. (R.H.) In happy times we are assembled
here,—

T' point the day, and fix the solemn pomp
For placing England's crown, with all due rites,
Upon our sovereign Edward's youthful brow.

Lord H. (L.H.) Some busy, meddling knaves, 'tis said
there are,

As such will still be prating, who presume
To carp and cavil at his royal right ;
Therefore, I hold it fitting, with the soonest,
T' appoint the order of the coronation :
So to approve our duty to the king,
And stay the babbling of such vain gainsayers.

Der. We all attend to know your highness' pleasure.
(*To Gloster.*)

Glos. (*In Centre.*) My lords, a set of worthy men
you are,

Prudent and just, and careful for the state ;
Therefore, to your most grave determination
I yield myself in all things ; and demand
What punishment your wisdom shall think meet
T' inflict upon those damnable contrivers,
Who shall with potions, charms, and witching drugs,
Practise against our person and our life !

Has. So much I hold the king your highness'
debtor,

So precious are you to the commonweal,
That I presume, not only for myself,
But in behalf of these my noble brothers,
To say, whoe'er they be, they merit death.

Glos. Then judge yourselves, convince your eyes of
truth :

Behold my arm, thus blasted, dry, and wither'd,
(*Pulling up his Sleeve.*)

Shrunk like a foul abortion, and decay'd,
Like some untimely product of the seasons,
Robb'd of its properties of strength and office.
This is the sorcery of Edward's wife,
Who, in conjunction with that harlot Shore,

And other like confederate midnight hags,
 By force of potent spells, of bloody characters,
 And conjurations horrible to hear,
 Call fiends and spectres from the yawning deep,
 And set the ministers of hell at work,
 To torture and despoil me of my life.

Has. If they have done this deed—

Glos. If they have done it!

Talk'st thou to me of ifs, audacious traitor!
 Thou art that strumpet witch's chief abettor,
 The patron and comploter of her mischiefs,
 And join'd in this contrivance for my death.
 Nay start not, lords.—What ho! a guard there, sirs!

Enter Guards, L.H.

Lord Hastings, I arrest thee of high treason.
 Seize him, and bear him instantly away.
 He sha' not live an hour. By holy Paul,
 I will not dine before his head be brought me.
 Ratcliffe, stay you, and see that it be done:
 The rest that love me, rise and follow me.

[Exeunt Gloster, R.H. the Lords following.]

Manet LORD HASTINGS, SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE,
and Guards.

Has. What! and no more but this!—How! to
 the scaffold!

O gentle Ratcliffe! tell me, do I hold thee?
 Or if I dream, what shall I do to wake,
 To break, to struggle through this dread confusion?
 For surely death itself is not so painful
 As is this sudden horror and surprise.

Sir R. (L.H.) You heard the duke's commands to
 me were absolute.

Therefore, my lord, address you to your shrift,
 With all good speed you may. Summon your cou-
 rage,
 And be yourself; for you must die this instant.

Has. Yes, Ratcliffe, I will take thy friendly counsel,

And die as a man should ; 'tis somewhat hard,
To call my scatter'd spirits home at once ;
But since what must be, must be ;—let necessity
Supply the place of time and preparation,
And arm me for the blow. 'Tis but to die,
'Tis but to venture on the common hazard,
Which many a time in battle I have run ;
'Tis but to close my eyes and shut out day-light,
To view no more the wicked ways of men,
No longer to behold the tyrant Gloster,
And be a weeping witness of the woes,
The desolation, slaughter, and calamities,
Which he shall bring on this unhappy land.

Enter ALICIA, L.H.

Alic. Stand off, and let me pass :—I will, I must
Catch him once more in these despairing arms,
And hold him to my heart.—O Hastings ! Hastings !

Has. Alas ! why com'st thou at this dreadful moment

To fill me with new terrors, new distractions ;
To turn me wild with thy distemper'd rage,
And shock the peace of my departing soul ?
Away ; I pr'ythee, leave me !

Alic. Stop a minute—

Till my full griefs find passage ;—O the tyrant !
Perdition fall on Gloster's head and mine.

Has. What means thy frantic grief ?

Alic. I cannot speak—

But I have murder'd thee ;—Oh, I could tell thee !

Has. Speak, and give ease to thy conflicting passion !

Be quick, nor keep me longer in suspense,
Time presses, and a thousand crowding thoughts
Break in at once ! this way and that they snatch ;
They tear my hurry'd soul ; all claim attention,
And yet not one is heard. Oh ! speak, and leave me,

For I have business would employ an age,
And but a minute's time to get it done in.

Alic. That, that's my grief ;—'tis I that urge thee on,
Thus hunt thee to the toil, sweep thee from earth,
And drive thee down this precipice of fate.

Has. Thy reason is grown wild. Could thy weak
hand

Bring on this mighty ruin ? If it could,
What have I done so grievous to thy soul,
So deadly, so beyond the reach of pardon,
That nothing but my life can make atonement ?

Alic. Thy cruel scorn hath stung me to the heart,
And set my burning bosom all in flames ;
Raving and mad I flew to my revenge,
And writ I know not what ;—told the protector,
That Shore's detested wife, by wiles, had won thee
To plot against his greatness.—He believ'd it,
(Oh, dire event of my pernicious counsel !)
And, while I meant destruction on her head,
He has turn'd it all on thine.

Has. O thou inhuman ! Turn thy eyes away,
And blast me not with their destructive beams :
Why should I curse thee with my dying breath ?
Be gone ! and let me die in peace. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Alic. Canst thou—O cruel Hastings, leave me thus ?
Hear me, I beg thee,—I conjure thee, hear me !
While with an agonizing heart, I swear,
By all the pangs I feel, by all the sorrows,
The terrors and despair thy loss shall give me,
My hate was on my rival bent alone.
Oh ! had I once divin'd, false as thou art,
A danger to thy life, I would have died,
I would have met it for thee.

Has. Now mark ! and tremble at heaven's just
award :
While thy insatiate wrath and fell revenge,
Pursu'd the innocence which never wrong'd thee,
Behold, the mischief falls on thee and me :
Remorse and heaviness of heart shall wait thee,
And everlasting anguish be thy portion :

For me, the snares of death are wound about me,
 And now, in one poor moment, I am gone.
 Oh ! if thou hast one tender thought remaining,
 Fly to thy closet, fall upon thy knees,
 And recommend my parting soul to mercy.

Alic. Oh ! yet, before I go for ever from thee,
 Turn thee in gentleness and pity to me, (*Kneeling.*)
 And, in compassion of my strong affliction,
 Say, is it possible you can forgive
 The fatal rashness of ungovern'd love?
 For, oh ! 'tis certain, if I had not lov'd thee
 Beyond my peace, my reason, fame, and life,
 This day of horror never would have known us.

Has. Oh, rise, and let me hush thy stormy sorrows.
 (*Raising her.*)

Assuage thy tears, for I will chide no more,
 No more upbraid thee, thou unhappy fair one.
 I see the hand of heav'n is arm'd against me ;
 And, in mysterious providence, decrees
 To punish me by thy mistaken hand.
 Most righteous doom ! for, oh, while I behold thee,
 Thy wrongs rise up in terrible array,
 And charge thy ruin on me ; thy fair fame,
 Thy spotless beauty, innocence, and youth,
 Dishonour'd, blasted, and betray'd by me.

Alic. And does thy heart relent for my undoing?
 Oh ! that inhuman Gloster could be mov'd,
 But half so easily as I can pardon !

(*Catesby enters, R.H.—Whispers Ratcliffe.*)

Has. Here, then, exchange we mutual forgiveness :
 So may the guilt of all my broken vows,
 My perjuries to thee, be all forgotten,
 As here my soul acquits thee of my death,
 As here I part without one angry thought,
 As here I leave thee with the softest tenderness,
 Mourning the chance of our disastrous loves,
 And begging heav'n to bless and to support thee.

Sir R. (L.H.) My lord, dispatch ; the duke has sent
 to chide me,
 For loitering in my duty—

Has. I obey.

Alic. Insatiate, savage monster! Is a moment
So tedious to thy malice? Oh, repay him,
Thou great avenger! Give him blood for blood:
Guilt haunt him! fiends pursue him! lightnings blast
him!

That he may know how terrible it is
To want that moment he denies thee now.

Has. This rage is all in vain, that tears thy bosom;
Retire, I beg thee;
To see thee thus, thou know'st not how it wounds
me;

Thy agonies are added to my own,
And make the burden more than I can bear.
Farewell:—good angels visit thy afflictions,
And bring thee peace and comfort from above.

[*Exit, L.H.*

Alic. Oh! stab me to the heart, some pitying hand,
Now strike me dead—

Re-enter LORD HASTINGS, L.H.

Has. One thing I had forgot;—
I charge thee, by our present common miseries;
By our past loves, if they have yet a name;
By all thy hopes of peace here and hereafter,
Let not the rancour of thy hate pursue
The innocence of thy unhappy friend;
Thou know'st who 'tis I mean; Oh! shouldst thou
wrong her,
Just heav'n shall double all thy woes upon thee,
And make 'em know no end;—remember this,
As the last warning of a dying man.
Farewell, for ever!

(*The Guards carry Hastings off, L.H.*)

Alic. For ever! Oh, for ever!
Oh, who can bear to be a wretch for ever!
My rival, too! His last thoughts hung on her,
And, as he parted, left a blessing for her;
Shall she be blest, and I be curst, for ever;

No ; since her fatal beauty was the cause
 Of all my suff'rings, let her share my pains ;
 Let her, like me, of ev'ry joy forlorn,
 Devote the hour when such a wretch was born ;
 Cast ev'ry good, and ev'ry hope behind ;
 Detest the works of nature, loathe mankind :
 Like me, with cries distracted, fill the air,
 Tear her poor bosom, rend her frantic hair,
 And prove the torments of the last despair. [*Exit, R.H.*]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Street.*

Enter BELMOUR and DUMONT, L.H.

Dum. You saw her, then ?

Bel. I met her, as returning,
 In solemn penance from the public cross.
 Before her, certain rascal officers,
 Slaves in authority, the knaves of justice,
 Proclaim'd the tyrant Gloster's cruel orders.
 Around her, numberless, the rabble flow'd,
 Should'ring each other, crowding for a view,
 Gaping and gazing, taunting and reviling ;
 Some pitying,—but those, alas ! how few !
 The most, such iron hearts we are, and such
 The base barbarity of human kind,
 With insolence and lewd reproach pursu'd her,
 Hooting and railing, and with villanous hands
 Gath'ring the filth from out the common ways,
 To hurl upon her head.

Dum. Inhuman dogs !
 How did she bear it ?

Bel. With the gentlest patience ;
 Submissive, sad, and lowly was her look ;

A burning taper in her hand she bore,
And on her shoulders carelessly confus'd,
With loose neglect, her lovely tresses hung;
Upon her cheek a faintish blush was spread;
Feeble she seem'd, and sorely smit with pain.
While barefoot as she trod the flinty pavement,
Her footsteps all along were mark'd with blood.
Yet, silent still she pass'd, and unrepining;
Her streaming eyes bent ever on the earth,
Except when in some bitter pang of sorrow,
To heav'n she seem'd in fervent zeal to raise,
And beg that mercy man deny'd her here.

Dum. When was this piteous sight?

Bel. These last two days.

You know my care was wholly bent on you,
To find the happy means of your deliverance,
Which but for Hastings' death I had not gain'd.
During that time, although I have not seen her,
Yet divers trusty messengers I've sent,
To wait about, and watch a fit convenience
To give her some relief, but all in vain;
A churlish guard attends upon her steps,
Who menace those with death, that bring her comfort,
And drive all succour from her.

Dum. Let 'em threaten;

Let proud oppression prove its fiercest malice;
So heav'n befriend my soul, as here I vow
To give her help, and share one fortune with her.

Bel. Mean you to see her thus, in your own form?

Dum. I do.

Bel. And have you thought upon the consequence?

Dum. What is there I should fear?

Bel. Have you examin'd
Into your inmost heart, and try'd at leisure
The sev'ral secret springs that move the passions?
Has mercy fix'd her empire there so sure,
That wrath and vengeance never may return?
Can you resume a husband's name, and bid
That wakeful dragon, fierce resentment, sleep?

Dum. O thou hast set my busy brain at work,
 And now she musters up a train of images,
 Which, to preserve my peace, I had cast aside,
 And sunk in deep oblivion.—Oh, that form !
 That angel face on which my dotage hung !
 How I have gaz'd upon her, till my soul
 With very eagerness went forth towards her,
 And issu'd at my eyes.—Was there a gem
 Which the sun ripens in the Indian mine,
 Or the rich bosom of the ocean yields ?
 What was there art could make, or wealth could buy,
 Which I have left unsought to deck her beauty ?
 What could her king do more ?—And yet she fled.

Bel. Away with that sad fancy—

Dum. Oh, that day !
 The thought of it must live for ever with me.
 I met her, Belmour, when the royal spoiler
 Bore her in triumph from my widow'd home !
 Within his chariot, by his side she sat,
 And listen'd to his talk with downward looks,
 'Till sudden as she chanc'd aside to glance,
 Her eyes encounter'd mine ;—Oh ! then, my friend !
 Oh ! who can paint my grief and her amazement !
 As at the stroke of death, twice turn'd she pale ;
 And twice a burning crimson blush'd all o'er her ;
 Then, with a shriek heart-wounding, loud she cry'd,
 While down her cheeks two gushing torrents ran
 Fast falling on her hands, which thus she wrung :—
 Mov'd at her grief, the tyrant ravisher,
 With courteous action woo'd her oft to turn ;
 Earnest he seem'd to plead, but all in vain ;
 Ev'n to the last she bent her sight towards me,
 And follow'd me,—till I had lost myself.

(Crosses to L.H.)

Bel. Alas, for pity ! Oh ! those speaking tears !
 Could they be false ? Did she not suffer with you.
 For though the king by force possess'd her person,
 Her unconsenting heart dwelt still with you ?
 If all her former woes were not enough,

Look on her now ; behold her where she wanders,
Hunted to death, distress'd on every side,
With no one hand to help ; and tell me then,
If ever misery were known like hers ?

Dum. And can she bear it ? Can that delicate frame
Endure the beating of a storm so rude ?

Can she, for whom the various seasons chang'd
To court her appetite and crown her board,
For whom the foreign vintages were press'd,
For whom the merchant spread his silken stores,
Can she—

Entreat for bread, and want the needful raiment
To wrap her shiv'ring bosom from the weather ?
When she was mine, no care came ever nigh her ;
I thought the gentlest breeze that wakes the spring,
Too rough to breathe upon her ; cheerfulness
Danc'd all the day before her, and at night
Soft slumbers waited on her downy pillow :—
Now, sad and shelterless, perhaps she lies,
Where piercing winds blow sharp, and the chill rain
Drops from some pent-house on her wretched head,
Drenches her locks, and kills her with the cold.
It is too much :—hence with her past offences,
They are aton'd at full.—Why stay we then ?
Oh ! let us haste, my friend, and find her out.

Bel. Somewhere about this quarter of the town,
I hear the poor abandon'd creature lingers :
Her guard, though set with strictest watch to keep
All food and friendship from her, yet permit her
To wander in the streets, there choose her bed,
And rest her head on what cold stone she pleases.

Dum. Here then let us divide ; each in his round
To search her sorrows out ; whose hap it is
First to behold her, this way let him lead
Her fainting steps, and meet we here together.

[*Exeunt*, R.H.]

SCENE II.—*A Street.*

Enter JANE SHORE, L.H.U.E. her Hair hanging loose on her Shoulders, and bare-footed.

Jane S. Yet, yet endure, nor murmur, O my soul !
 For are not thy transgressions great and numberless ?
 Do they not cover thee like rising floods,
 And press thee like a weight of waters down ?
 Wait then with patience, till the circling hours
 Shall bring the time of thy appointed rest,
 And lay thee down in death.
 And, hark ! methinks the roar that late pursu'd me,
 Sinks like the murmurs of a falling wind,
 And softens into silence. Does revenge
 And malice then grow weary, and forsake me ?
 My guard, too, that observ'd me still so close,
 Tire in the task of their inhuman office,
 And loiter far behind. Alas ! I faint,
 My spirits fail at once.—'This is the door
 Of my Alicia ;—blessed opportunity !
 I'll steal a little succour from her goodness,
 Now while no eye observes me.

(She knocks at R.H.D.)

Enter SERVANT, R.H.D.

Is your lady,
 My gentle friend, at home ! Oh ! bring me to her :
(Going in.)

Serv. Hold, mistress, whither would you ?
(Throwing her back.)

Jane S. Do you not know me !

Serv. I know you well, and know my orders too ;
 You must not enter here ;—

Jane S. Tell my Alicia,
 'Tis I would see her.

Serv. She is ill at ease,
 And will admit no visitor

Jane S. But tell her
'Tis I, her friend, the partner of her heart,
Wait at the door and beg—

Serv. 'Tis all in vain :—

Go hence and howl to those that will regard you.

[*Shuts the Door.*]

Jane S. It was not always thus : the time has been,
When this unfriendly door, that bars my passage,
Flew wide, and almost leap'd from off its hinges,
To give me entrance here : when this good house
Has pour'd forth all its dwellers to receive me ;
When my approaches made a little holiday,
And every face was dress'd in smiles to meet me :
But now 'tis otherwise ; and those who bless'd me,
Now curse me to my face. Why should I wander,
Stray further on, for I can die ev'n here ?

(*She sits down in the centre of the Stage.*)

Enter ALICIA, in disorder, R.H.D.

Alic. What wretch art thou, whose misery and base-
ness
Hangs on my door ; whose hateful whine of woe
Breaks in upon my sorrows, and distracts
My jarring senses with thy beggar's cry ?

Jane S. A very beggar, and a wretch, indeed ;
One driv'n by strong calamity to seek
For succours here : one perishing for want,
Whose hunger has not tasted food these three days ;
And humbly asks, for charity's dear sake,
A draught of water and a little bread.

Alic. And dost thou come to me, to me for bread ?
I know thee not.—Go ;—hunt for it abroad,
Where wanton hands upon the earth have scatter'd it,
Or cast it on the waters.—Mark the eagle,
And hungry vulture, where they wind the prey ;
Watch where the ravens of the valley feed,
And seek thy food with them :—I know thee not.

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Jane S. (Rises.) And yet there was a time, when my
Alicia

Has thought unhappy Shore her dearest blessing.
And mourn'd the live-long day she pass'd without me;
Inclining fondly to me she has sworn,
She lov'd me more than all the world besides.

Alic. Ha! say'st thou!—Let me look upon thee
well ;—

'Tis true;—I know thee now;—a mischief on thee !
Thou art that fatal fair, that cursed she,
That set my brain a madd'ning. Thou hast robb'd me;
Thou hast undone me.—Murder ! O, my Hastings !
See his pale bloody head shoots glaring by me !
Avaunt ; and come not near me.—

Jane S. To thy hand
I trusted all ; gave my whole store to thee.
Nor do I ask it back ; allow me but
The smallest pittance, give me but to eat,
Lest I fall down and perish here before thee.

Alic. Nay ! tell not me ! Where is thy king, thy
Edward,
And all the cringing train of courtiers,
That bent the knee before thee ?

Jane S. Oh ! for mercy !

Alic. Mercy ! I know it not !—for I am miserable.
I'll give thee misery, for here she dwells,
'This is her house, where the sun never dawns,
'The bird of night sits screaming o'er the roof,
Grim spectres sweep along the horrid gloom,
And nought is heard but wailings and lamentings.
Hark ! something cracks above ! it shakes ! it totters !
And see the nodding ruin falls to crush me !
'Tis fall'n, 'tis here ! I felt it on my brain !
Let her take my counsel :
Why shouldst thou be a wretch ? Stab, tear thy heart,
And rid thyself of this detested being ;
I wo' not linger long behind thee here.
A waving flood of bluish fire swells o'er me ;
And now 'tis out, and I am drown'd in blood.
Ha ! what art thou ! thou horrid headless trunk ?
It is my Hastings ! see he wafts me on !

Away ! I go ! I fly ! I follow thee. (*Rushes off*; R.H.)

Jane S. Alas ! she raves ; her brain I fear is turn'd,
In mercy look upon her, gracious heav'n,
Nor visit her for any wrong to me !
Sure I am near upon my journey's end :
My head runs round, my eyes begin to fail,
And dancing shadows swim before my sight,
I can no more ; (*Lies down.*) receive me, thou cold
earth,
Thou common parent, take me to thy bosom,
And let me rest with thee.

Enter BELMOUR, R.H.U.E.

Bel. Upon the ground !
Thy miseries can never lay thee lower.
Look up, thou poor afflicted one ! thou mourner,
Whom none has comforted ! Where are thy friends,
The dear companions of thy joyful days,
Whose hearts thy warm prosperity made glad,
Whose arms were taught to grow like ivy round thee,
And bind thee to their bosoms ?—Thus with thee,
Thus let us live, and let us die, they said.
Now where are they ?

Jane S. Ah, Belmour ! where indeed ! they stand
aloof,
And view my desolation from afar !
And yet thy goodness turns aside to pity me.
Alas ! there may be danger ; get thee gone.
Let me not pull a ruin on thy head,
Leave me to die alone, for I am fall'n
Never to rise, and all relief is vain.

Bel. Yet raise thy drooping head ; for I am come
To chase away despair. Behold ! where yonder
That honest man, that faithful, brave Dumont,
Is hastening to thy aid—

Jane S. Dumont ! Ha ! where !

(*Raising herself, and looking about.*)

Then heav'n has heard my pray'r ; his very name
Renews the springs of life, and cheers my soul.
Has he then 'scap'd the snare ?

Bel. He has ; but see—
He comes unlike the Dumont you knew,

For now he wears your better angel's form,
And comes to visit you with peace and pardon.

Enter SHORE, L.H.

Jane S. Speak, tell me ! Which is he ! and how
what would

This dreadful vision ! See it comes upon me—

It is my husband—Ah ! *(She swoons.)*

Shore. She faints, support her !

Bel. Her weakness could not bear the strong surprise.

But see, she stirs ! and the returning blood
Faintly begins to blush again, and kindle
Upon her ashy cheek ;—

Shore. So,—gently raise her.— *(Raising her up.)*

Jane S. Ha ! what art thou ? Belmour.

Bel. How fare you, lady ?

Jane S. My heart is thrill'd with horror,—

Bel. Be of courage ;—

Your husband lives ! 'tis he, my worthiest friend ;—

Jane S. Still art thou there ! still dost thou hover
round me !

Oh, save me, Belmour, from his angry shade !

Bel. 'Tis he himself ! he lives ! look up :—

Jane S. I dare not !

Oh ! that my eyes could shut him out for ever—

Shore. Am I so hateful then, so deadly to thee,
To blast thy eyes with horror ? Since I'm grown
A burden to the world, myself, and thee,
Would I had ne'er survived to see thee more.

Jane S. Oh ! thou most injur'd—dost thou live,
indeed ?

Fall then, ye mountains, on my guilty head ;
Hide me, ye rocks, within your secret caverns ;
Cast thy black veil upon my shame, O night !
And shield me with thy sable wing for ever.

Shore. Why dost thou turn away ?—Why tremble
thus ?

Why thus indulge thy fears, and in despair,
Abandon thy distracted soul to horror ?
Cast every black and guilty thought behind thee,

And let 'em never vex thy quiet more.
 My arms, my heart, are open to receive thee,
 To bring thee back to thy forsaken home,
 With tender joy, with fond forgiving love.—
 Let us haste.—

Now while occasion seems to smile upon us,
 Forsake this place of shame, and find a shelter.

Jane S. What shall I say to you? But I obey;—

Shore. Lean on my arm;—

Jane. S. Alas! I'm wondrous faint:

But that's not strange, I have not eat these three days.

Shore. Oh, merciless!

Jane S. Oh! I am sick at heart!

Shore. Thou murd'rous sorrow!

Wo't thou still drink her blood, pursue her still?

Must she then die? O my poor penitent!

Speak peace to thy sad heart: she hears me not:

Grief masters ev'ry sense—

Enter CATESBY, L.H.U.E. with a Guard.

Cates. Seize on 'em both, as traitors to the state!—

Bel. What means this violence?

(Guards lay hold on Shore and Belmour.)

Cates. Have we not found you,

In scorn of the protector's strict command,

Assisting this base woman, and abetting

Her infamy?

Shore. Infamy on thy head!

Thou tool of power, thou pander to authority!

I tell thee knave, thou know'st of none so virtuous,

And she that bore thee was an Ethiop to her.

Cates. You'll answer this at full;—away with 'em!

Shore. Is charity grown treason to your court?

What honest man would live beneath such rulers?

I am content that we should die together,—

Cates. Convey the men to prison; but for her,—

Leave her to hunt her fortune as she may.

Jane S. I will not part with him:—for me!—for me!

Oh! must he die for me?

(Following him as he is carried off.—She falls.)

Shore. Inhuman villains!

(*Breaks from the Guards.*)

Stand off! the agonies of death are on her!—
She pulls, she gripes me hard with her cold hand.

Jane S. Was this blow wanting to complete my ruin?

Oh! let me go, ye ministers of terror.
He shall offend no more, for I will die,
And yield obedience to your cruel master.
Tarry a little but a little longer,
And take my last breath with you.

Shore. Oh, my love!

Why dost thou fix thy dying eyes upon me,
With such an earnest, such a piteous look,
As if thy heart were full of some sad meaning
Thou couldst not speak?—

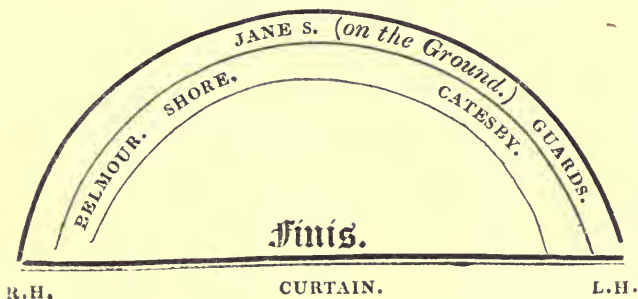
Jane S. Forgive me!—but forgive me!

Shore. Be witness for me, ye celestial host,
Such mercy and such pardon as my soul
Accords to thee, and begs of heav'n to show thee;
May such befall me at my latest hour,
And make my portion blest or curst for ever.

Jane S. Then all is well, and I shall sleep in peace;—
'Tis very dark, and I have lost you now:—
Was there not something I would have bequeath'd you?
But I have nothing left me to bestow,
Nothing but one sad sigh. Oh! mercy, heav'n!

(*Dies.*)

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.



EPILOGUE.

YE modest matrons all, ye virtuous wives,
Who lead with horrid husbands decent lives ;
You, who, for all you are in such a taking,
To see your spouses drinking, gaming, raking,
Yet make a conscience still of cuckold-making ;
What can we say your pardon to obtain ?

This matter here was prov'd against poor Jane :
She never once deny'd it ; but, in short,
Whimper'd,—and cry'd,—“ Sweet sir, I'm sorry for't.”
'Twas well she met a kind, good natur'd soul ;
We are not all so easy to control :
I fancy one might find in this good town,
Some would ha' told the gentleman his own ;
Have answered smart,—“ To what do you pretend,
Blockhead ?—As if I must not see a friend :
Tell me of hackney-coaches,—Jaunts to th' city,—
Where should I buy my china !—Faith, I'll fit ye.”—
Our wife was of a milder, meeker spirit ;
You !—lords and masters ! was not that some merit ?
Don't you allow it to be a virtuous bearing,
When we submit thus to your domineering ?
Well, peace be with her, she did wrong most surely ;
But so do many more who look demurely.
Nor should our mourning madam weep alone,
There are more ways of wickedness than one.
If the reforming stage should fall to shaming
Ill nature, pride, hypocrisy, and gaming ;
The poets frequently might move compassion,
And with she-tragedies o'er-run the nation.
Then judge the fair offender with good nature,
And let your fellow-feeling curb your satire.
What, if our neighbours have some little failing,
Must we needs fall to damning and to railing ?
For her excuse too, be it understood,
That if the woman was not quite so good,
Her lover was a king, she flesh and blood.
And since sh' has dearly paid the sinful score,
Be kind at last, and pity poor Jane Shore.

Orberry's Edition.

THE CRITIC ;

OR,

A TRAGEDY REHEARSED,

A

DRAMATIC PIECE;

By R. B. Sheridan.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED

WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

BY W. OXBERRY, Comedian.

London.

PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS, BY W. SIMPKIN, AND
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1820.

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8, White-Hart Yard:

Remarks.

THE CRITIC.

This piece, though not so uniformly brilliant as *The School for Scandal*, is yet worthy of Sheridan, a name that at once forms the glory and the disgrace of the British nation. That it is our glory belongs to the genius of him who bore it! that it is our disgrace is the fault of the heartless avarice, the stupid insensibility to talent, which could suffer such merit to expire in unpitied poverty! The time was, when English Nobles and English Princes were the fosterers of genius, but that time has past away, and the rich of the present century employ their wealth much more to their own satisfaction as well as glory of the nation. They are of opinion with Farmer Ashfield, who held genius to be the worst horse in the stable, but then they go beyond the honest farmer in their practice; for it does not appear that he denied the worthless animal either food or shelter, while these gentlemen will grant him neither one nor the other.

The plan of *The Critic* is not altogether new to the English language; we have something very similar to it in the *Rehearsal of Buckingham*, and the *Pasquin* of Fielding; but the merit of the execution belongs entirely to Sheridan, and his work is likely to outlive those of his predecessors not only from its superior brilliancy, but because it is less local in its language and character; it is true that Sir Fretful was the portrait, and no very favourable one, of the celebrated Cumberland, but the feelings of Sir Fretful are the feelings of all times and all people. Had Sheridan given only a portrait of peculiar manners, the value of the portrait must have been in a great measure lost with the original; but by painting passions he has formed a work that is not likely to lose any of its interest till the last spark of taste amongst us is extinguished.—“Yet after all it was a scurvy trick.”—Poor Cumberland was a lively writer, an elegant though perhaps

not profound scholar, and, if the chronicles of the time lie not, an amiable and worthy man.

Let the earth cover and protect its dead
And let man's breath thither return in peace
From whence it came; his spirit to the skies,
His body to the clay of which 'twas form'd,
Imparted to him as a loan for life,
Which he and all must render back again
To earth, the common mother of mankind.

Moschion, in the Observer.

So wrote Cumberland; let him have the benefit of its application; his life was a life of pain, and malice has been busy with him in the grave; weeds have grown abundantly round it, and holy is the labour that plucks a nettle from the habitation of the dead.

The dialogue of the Critic has more humour and less wit than the School for Scandal, in which respect it seems nearly allied to the author's earlier work of the Rivals. The humour, indeed, is extremely rich; and we must confess, though we expect the opinion will be received "*naso adunco*," that we think humour a higher quality than wit. The involuntary absurdities of Dangle are to us a higher treat than all the smart speeches of Mr. Sneer, who, however, is a wit of the first order; for instance, Dangle's declaration that the Interpreter is the hardest to be understood of the two,* and the praying chorus, are delightful.

It is perhaps a misfortune that Sheridan wrote the School for Scandal at so early a period of his career; the very excellence of this piece seems to have terrified him, and paralyzed his powers; having no one else to fear, he feared himself, but we have no right to complain; had he written only one of his excellent Comedies, he had done enough for his own glory and that of his brilliant, though neglected country.

* *A portion of the text omitted in the Representation.*

PROLOGUE,

BY THE HONOURABLE RICHARD FITZPATRICK.

*The Sister Muses, whom these realms obey,
Who o'er the Drama hold divided sway,
Sometimes, by evil counsellors, 'tis said,
Like earth-born potentates have been misled.
In those gay days of wickedness and wit,
When Villiers criticiz'd what Dryden writ,
The Tragic Queen, to please a tasteless crowd,
Had learn'd to bellow, rant, and roar so loud,
That frighten'd Nature, her best friend before,
The blust'ring beldam's company forswore,
Her comic Sister, who had wit 'tis true,
With all her merits, had her failings too ;
And would sometimes in mirthful moments use
A style too flippant for a well-bred Muse.
Then female modesty abash'd began
To seek the friendly refuge of the fan,
Achile behind that slight intrenchment stood,
'Till driv'n from thence, she left the stage for good.
In our more pious, and far chaster times !
These sure no longer are the Muse's crimes !
But some complain that, former faults to shun,
The reformation to extremes has run.
The frantic hero's wild delirium past,
Now insipidity succeeds bombast ;
So slow Melpomene's cold numbers creep,
Here dullness seems her drowsy court to keep,
And we, are scarce awake, whilst you are fast asleep. }
Thalia, once so ill behav'd and rude,
Reform'd, is now become an arrant prude,
Retailing nightly to the yawning pit,
The purest morals, undest'd by wit !
Our Author offers in these motley scenes,
A slight remonstrance to the Drama's queens,*

PROLOGUE.

*Nor let the goddesses be over nice ;
Free spoken subjects give the best advice.
Although not quite a novice in his trade,
His cause to-night requires no common aid.
To this, a friendly, just, and pow'rful court,
I come Ambassador to beg support.
Can be undaunted, brave the critic's rage ?
In civil broils, with brother bards engage ?
Hold forth their errors to the public eye,
Nay more, e'en Newspapers themselves defy ?
Say, must his single arm encounter all ?
By numbers vanquish'd, e'en the brave may fall ;
And though no leader should success distrust,
Whose troops are willing, and whose cause is just ;
To bid such hosts of angry foes defiance,
His chief dependance must be, YOUR ALLIANCE.*

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation, is one hour and three quarters.

Stage Directions.

By	R.H.	.	.	is meant	.	.	Right Hand.
	L.H.	.	.	.	.	.	Left Hand.
	S.E.	.	.	.	.	.	Second Entrance.
	U.E.	.	.	.	.	.	Upper Entrance.
	M.D.	.	.	.	.	.	Middle Door.
	D.F.	.	.	.	.	.	Door in Flat.
	R.H.D.	.	.	.	.	.	Right Hand Door.
	L.H.D.	.	.	.	.	.	Left Hand Door.

Costume.

DANGLE.

Blue coat, white waistcoat and breeches.

SNEER.

Brown coat, white waistcoat, and black breeches.

PUFF.

Blue coat, white waistcoat, and drab coloured breeches.

SIR FRETFUL PLAGIARY.

Half dress suit.

MRS. DANGLE.

Fashionable morning dress.

LORD BURLEIGH.

Black velvet doublet, trunks and cloak.

EARL LEICESTER.

Brown—ibid.

SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON.

Blue—ibid.

BEEFEATER.

Beefeater's dress.

WHISKERANDOS.

Blue and orange Spanish dress.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

Buff and scarlet—ibid.

TILBURINA.

First dress.—Brocade petticoat, body, and train.—Second dress.—White satin, and white muslin veil.

CONFIDANT.

First dress.—Brocade gown.—Second dress.—White muslin.

NEICES.

Brocade Petticoats, body's, and trains.

Persons Represented.

	<i>Drury Lane.</i>	<i>Covent Garden.</i>
<i>Dangle</i>	Mr. Palmer.	Mr. Connor.
<i>Sneer</i>	Mr. Powell.	Mr. Egerton.
<i>Sir Fretful Plagiary</i>	Mr. Downton.	Mr. W. Farren.
<i>Under Prompter</i>	Mr. Maddocks.	Mr. King.
<i>Puff</i>	Mr. Harley.	Mr. Jones.
 <i>Mrs. Dangle</i>	 Mrs. Sparks.	 Mrs. Connor.

Characters of the Tragedy.

<i>Lord Burleigh</i>	Mr. Marshall.	Mr. Williams.
<i>Governor of Tilbury Fort</i>	Mr. Carr.	Mr. Comer.
<i>Earl of Leicester</i>	Mr. Coveney.	Mr. Jefferies.
<i>Sir Walter Raleigh</i>	Mr. Hughes.	Mr. Treby.
<i>Sir Christopher Hatton</i>	Mr. Minton.	Mr. Menage.
<i>Master of the Horse</i>	Mr. Ebsworth.	Mr. Atkins.
<i>Beefeater</i>	Mr. Smith.	Mr. J. Russell.
<i>Don Ferolo Whiskerandos</i>	Mr. Oxberry.	Mr. Liston.
 <i>First Niece</i>	 Miss Ivers.	 Mrs. Coates.
<i>Second Niece</i>	Miss Cooke.	Mrs. Sexton.
<i>Confidant</i>	Miss Tidswell.	
<i>Tilburina</i>	Mrs. Orger.	Mrs. Gibbs.

*Guards, Constables, Servants, Chorus, Rivers,
Attendants, &c. &c.*

THE CRITIC.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Mr. and Mrs. Dangle at Breakfast, and reading Newspapers.*

DANGLE (*Reading, L.H.*)

‘BRUTUS to Lord North.’—‘Letter the Second on the State of the Army.’—Pshaw! ‘To the first L— dash D of the A— dash Y.’—‘Genuine Extract of a Letter from St. Kitt’s.’—‘Coxheath intelligence.’—‘It is now confidently asserted that Sir Charles Hardy.’—Pshaw!—Nothing but about the fleet and the nation!—and I hate all politics but theatrical politics.—Where’s the Morning Chronicle?

Mrs. D. (R.H.) Yes, that’s your Gazette.

Dan. So, here we have it.—

‘*Theatrical intelligence extraordinary.*’—‘We hear there is a new tragedy in rehearsal at Drury-lane theatre, call’d the Spanish Armada, said to be written by Mr. Puff, a gentleman well known in the theatrical world; if we may allow ourselves to give credit to the report of the performers, who, truth to say, are in general but indifferent judges, this piece abounds with the most striking and received beauties of modern composition.’—So! I am very

glad my friend Puff's tragedy is in such forwardness.—*Mrs. Dangle*, my dear, you will be very glad to hear that Puff's tragedy—

Mrs. D. Lord, Mr. Dangle, why will you plague me about such nonsense!—Now the plays are begun, I shall have no peace.—Isn't it sufficient to make yourself ridiculous by your passion for the theatre, without continually teasing me to join you!—Why can't you ride your hobby-horse without desiring to place me on a pillion behind you, Mr. Dangle?

Dan. Nay, my dear, I was only going to read—

Mrs. D. No, no; you will never read any thing that's worth listening to:—you hate to hear about your country; there are letters every day with Roman signatures, demonstrating the certainty of an invasion, and proving that the nation is utterly undone.—But you never will read any thing to entertain one.

Dan. What has a woman to do with politics, Mrs. Dangle?

Mrs. D. And what have you to do with the theatre, Mr. Dangle?—Why should you affect the character of a critic? I have no patience with you!—haven't you made yourself the jest of all your acquaintance by your interference in matters where you have no business?—Are not you call'd a theatrical Quidnunc, and a mock Mæcenas to second-hand authors?

Dan. True; my power with the managers is pretty notorious; but is it no credit to have applications from all quarters for my interest?—From lords to recommend fidlers, from ladies to get boxes, from authors to get answers, and from actors to get engagements?

Mrs. D. Yes, truly; you have contrived to get a share in all the plague and trouble of theatrical property, without the profit, or even the credit of the abuse that attends it.

Dan. I am sure, Mrs. Dangle, you are no loser by it, however; you have all the advantages of it: mightn't you, last winter, have had the reading of the new Pantomime a fortnight previous to its performance?—And doesn't Mr. Spring let you take places for a play before it is advertised, and set you down for a box for every new piece through the season?—And didn't my friend, Mr. Smatter, dedi-

cate his last farce to you at my particular request, Mrs. Dangle?

Mrs. D. Yes; but wasn't the farce damn'd, Mr. Dangle?—And to be sure it is extremely pleasant to have one's house made the motley rendezvous of all the lacqueys of literature: the very high change of trading authors and jobbing critics!—Yes, my drawing-room is an absolute register-office for candidate actors, and poets without character; then to be continually alarmed with Misses and Ma'ams piping hysteric changes on Juliets and Dorindas, Pollys and Ophelias; and the very furniture trembling at the probationary starts and unprovok'd rants of would-be Richards and Hamlets!—And what is worse than all, now that the manager has monopoliz'd the opera-house, haven't we the Signors and Signoras calling here, sliding their smooth semi-breves, and gargling glib divisions in their outlandish throats;—with foreign emissaries and French spies, for aught I know, disguised like fiddlers and figure dancers!

Dan. Mercy! Mrs. Dangle!

Mrs. D. And to employ your self so idly at such an alarming crisis as this too—when, if you had the least spirit, you would have been at the head of one of the Westminster associations—or trailing a volunteer pike in the Artillery Ground!—But you—o'my conscience, I believe if the French were landed to-morrow, your first inquiry would be, whether they had brought a theatrical troop with them.

Dan. Mrs. Dangle, it does not signify—I say the stage is 'the Mirror of Nature,' and the actors are 'the Abstract, and brief Chronicles of the time:'—and pray what can a man of sense study better?—Besides, you will not easily persuade me that there is no credit or importance in being at the head of a band of critics, who take upon them to decide for the whole town, whose opinion and patronage all writers solicit, and whose recommendation no manager dares refuse!

Mrs. D. Ridiculous!—Both managers and authors of the least merit laugh at your pretensions.—The public is their critic,—without whose fair approbation they know no play can rest on the stage, and with whose applause they welcome such attacks as yours, and laugh at the malice of them, where they can't at the wit.

Dan. Very well,—madam, very well.

Enter SERVANT, L.H. D. R

Serv. Mr. Sneer, sir, to wait on you.

Dan. O, show Mr. Sneer up. [*Exit Servant, L.H.*] Plague on't, now we must appear loving and affectionate, or Sneer will hitch us into a story.

Mrs. D. With all my heart; you can't be more ridiculous than you are.

Dan. You are enough to provoke—

Enter SNEER, L.H.

Ha! my dear Sneer, I am vastly glad to see you. My dear, here's Mr. Sneer.

Mrs. D. Good morning to you, sir.

Dan. Mrs. Dangle and I have been diverting ourselves with the papers.—Pray, Sneer, won't you go to Drury-lane theatre the first night of Puff's tragedy?

Sneer. Yes; but I suppose one shan't be able to get in, for on the first night of a new piece they always fill the house with orders to support it. But here, Dangle, I have brought you two pieces, one of which you must exert yourself to make the managers accept, I can tell you that, for 'tis written by a person of consequence.

Dan. So! now my plagues are beginning.

Sneer. Aye, I am glad of it, for now you'll be happy. Why, my dear Dangle, it is a pleasure to see how you enjoy your volunteer fatigue, and your solicited solicitations.

Dan. It's a great trouble;—yet, egad, it's pleasant too.—Why, sometimes of a morning, I have a dozen people call on me at breakfast time, whose faces I never saw before, nor ever desire to see again.

Sneer. That must be very pleasant indeed!

Dan. And not a week but I receive fifty letters, and not a line in them about any business of my own.

Sneer. An amusing correspondence!

Dan. (Reading.) “Bursts into tears, and exit.” What, is this a tragedy!

Sneer. No, that's a genteel comedy, not a translation,—only taken from the French; it is written in a style which they have lately tried to run down; the true sentimental,

and nothing ridiculous in it from the beginning to the end.

Mrs. D. Well, if they had kept to that, I should not have been such an enemy to the stage,—there was some edification to be got from those pieces, Mr. Sneer.

Sneer. (*Crosses to Centre.*) I am quite of your opinion, Mrs. Dangle; the theatre, in proper hands, might certainly be made the school of morality; but now, I am sorry to say it, people seem to go there principally for their entertainment.

Mrs. D. It would have been more to the credit of the managers to have kept it in the other line.

Sneer. Undoubtedly, madam, and hereafter perhaps to have had it recorded, that in the midst of a luxurious and dissipated age, they preserv'd *two* houses in the capital, where the conversation was always moral at least, if not entertaining!

Dan. Now, egad, I think the worst alteration is in the nicety of the audience. No double entendre, no smart inuendo admitted; even Vanbrugh and Congreve obliged to undergo a bungling reformation!

Sneer. Yes, and our prudery in this respect is just on a par with the artificial bashfulness of a courtesan who increases the blush upon her cheek in an exact proportion to the diminution of her modesty.

Dan. Sneer can't even give the public a good word!—But what have we here?—This seems a very odd—

Sneer. O, that's a comedy, on a very new plan; replete with wit and mirth, yet of a most serious moral! You see it is call'd "The Reformed Housebreaker;" where, by the mere force of humour, housebreaking is put into so ridiculous a light, that if the piece has its proper run, I have no doubt but that bolts and bars will be entirely useless by the end of the season.

Dan. Egad, this is new indeed!

Sneer. Yes; it is written by a particular friend of mine, who has discovered that the follies and foibles of society, are subjects unworthy the notice of the comic muse, who should be taught to stoop only at the greater vices and blacker crimes of humanity;—gibbeting capital offences in five acts, and pilloring petty larcenies in two.—In short, his idea is to

dramatize the penal laws, and make the stage a court of case to the Old Bailey.

Dan. It is truly moral.

Enter SERVANT, L.H.

Serv. Sir Fretful Plagiary, sir.

Dan. Beg him to walk up. [*Exit Serrant, L.H.*] Now, Mrs. Dangle, Sir Fretful Plagiary is an author to your own taste.

Mrs. D. I confess he is a favourite of mine, because every body else abuses him.

Sneer. Very much to the credit of your charity, madam, if not of your judgment.

Dan. But, egad, he allows no merit to any author but himself, that's the truth on't; tho' he's my friend.

Sneer. Never.—He is as envious as an old maid verging on the desperation of six-and-thirty: and then the insidious humility with which he seduces you to give a free opinion on any of his works, can be exceeded only by the petulant arrogance with which he is sure to reject your observations.

Dan. Very true, egad;—tho' he's my friend.

Sneer. Then his affected contempt of all newspaper strictures; tho', at the same time, he is the sorest man alive, and shrinks like scorch'd parchment from the fiery ordeal of true criticism; yet is he so covetous of popularity, that he had rather be abused than not mentioned at all.

Dan. There's no denying it;—tho' he is my friend.

Sneer. You have read the tragedy he has just finish'd, haven't you?

Dan. O yes; he sent it to me yesterday.

Sneer. Well, and you think it execrable, don't you?

Dan. Why, between ourselves, egad I must own,—tho' he's my friend,—that it is one of the most—He's here, (*Aside.*)—finished and most admirable perform—

Sir F. (*Without, L.H.*) Mr. Sneer with him, did you say?

Enter SIR FRETFUL, L.H.

Dan. Ah, my dear friend!—Egad, we were just speaking of your tragedy.—Admirable, Sir Fretful, admirable!

Sneer. You never did any thing beyond it, Sir Fretful, —never in your life.

Sir F. (Crosses to Centre.) You make me extremely happy; for, without a compliment, my dear Sneer, there isn't a man in the world whose judgment I value as I do your's;—and Mr. Dangle's.

Mrs. D. They are only laughing at you, Sir Fretful; for it was but just now that—

Dan. Mrs. Dangle!—Ah, Sir Fretful, you know Mrs. Dangle.—My friend Sneer was rallying just now.—He knows how she admires you, and—

Sir F. O Lord, I am sure Mr. Sneer has more taste and sincerity than to—~~A damn'd double-faced fellow.~~ (*Aside.*)

Dan. Yes, yes,—Sneer will jest,—but a better humour'd—

Sir F. O, I know—

Dan. He has a ready turn for ridicule,—his wit costs him nothing.—

Sir F. No, egad,—Or I should wonder how he came by it. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. D. Because his jest is always at the expense of his friend.

Dan. But, Sir Fretful, have you sent your play to the managers yet?—or can I be of any service to you?

Sir F. No, no, I thank you; I believe the piece had sufficient recommendation with it.—I thank you tho'—I sent it to the manager of Covent Garden Theatre this morning.

Sneer. I should have thought now, that it might have been cast (as the actors call it,) better at Drury Lane.

Sir F. O lud! no—never send a play there while I live,—harkee! (*Whispers Sneer.*)

Sneer. *Writes himself!*—I know he does—

Sir F. I say nothing—I take away from no man's merit—am hurt at no man's good fortune—I say nothing—but this I will say—through all my knowledge of life, I have observed—that there is not a passion so strongly rooted in the human heart as envy!

Sneer. I believe you have reason for what you say, indeed.

Sir F. Besides;—I can tell you it is not always so safe to leave a play in the hands of those who write themselves.

Sneer. What, they may steal from them, hey, my dear Plagiary?

Sir F. Steal!—to be sure they may; and, egad, serve your best thoughts as gypsies do stolen children, disfigure them to make 'em pass for their own.

Sneer. But your present work is a sacrifice to Melpomene, and *he* you know never—

Sir F. That's no security.—A dext'rous plagiarist may do any thing.—Why, sir, for aught I know, he might take out some of the best things in my tragedy, and put them into his own comedy.

Sneer. That might be done, I dare be sworn.

Sir F. And then, if such a person gives you the least hint or assistance, he is devilish apt to take the merit of the whole.—

Dan. If it succeeds.

Sir F. Aye,—but with regard to this piece, I think I can hit that gentleman, for I can safely swear he never read it.

Sneer. I'll tell you how you may hurt him more—

Sir F. How?—

Sneer. Swear he wrote it.

Sir F. Plague on't now, *Sneer*, I shall take it ill.—I believe you want to take away my character as an author!

Sneer. Then I am sure you ought to be very much oblig'd to me.

Sir F. Hey!—sir!—

Dan. O you know, he never means what he says.

Sir F. Sincerely then—you do like the piece?

Sneer. Wonderfully!

Sir F. But come now, there must be something that you think might be mended, hey?—Mr. Dangle, has nothing struck you?

Dan. Why faith, it is but an ungracious thing for the most part to—

Sir F. With most authors it is just so indeed; they are in general strangely tenacious!—but, for my part, I am never so well pleased as when a judicious critic points out any defect to me; for what is the purpose of showing a work to a friend, if you don't mean to profit by his opinion?

Sneer. Very true.—Why then, tho' I seriously admire the piece upon the whole, yet there is one small objection; which, if you'll give me leave, I'll mention.

Sir F. Sir you can't oblige me more.

Sneer. I think it wants incident.

Sir F. Good god!—you surprise me!—wants incident!—

Sneer. Yes; I own I think the incidents are too few.

Sir F. Good god! believe me, Mr. Sneer, there is no person for whose judgment I have a more implicit deference, —but I protest to you, Mr. Sneer, I am only apprehensive that the incidents are too crowded.—My dear Dangle, how does it strike you?

Dan. Really I can't agree with my friend Sneer,—I think the plot quite sufficient; and the four first acts by many degrees the best I ever read or saw in my life. If I might venture to suggest any thing, it is that the interest rather falls off in the fifth.

Sir F. Rises; I believe you mean, sir.

Dan. No; I don't upon my word.

Sir F. Yes, yes, you do upon my soul;—it certainly don't fall off, I assure you; no, no, it don't fall off.

Dan. Now, Mrs. Dangle, didn't you say it struck you in the same light? (*Dangle and Sneer retire up the stage.*)

Mrs. D. No, indeed, I did not:—I did not see a fault in any part of the play from the beginning to the end.

Sir F. Upon my soul the women are the best judges after all!

Mrs. D. Or if I made any objection, I am sure it was to nothing in the piece; but that I was afraid it was, on the whole, a little too long.

Sir F. Pray, madam, do you speak as to duration of time; or do you mean that the story is tediously spun out?

Mrs. D. O lud! no.—I speak only with reference to the usual length of acting plays.

Sir F. Then I am very happy,—very happy indeed,—because the play is a short play, a remarkable short play:—I should not venture to differ with a lady on a point of taste; but, on these occasions, the watch, you know, is the critic.

Mrs. D. Then, I suppose, it must have been Mr. Dangle's drawling manner of reading it to me.

Sir F. O, if Mr. Dangle read it! that's quite another affair;—but I assure you, Mrs. Dangle, the first evening you can spare me three hours and an half, I'll undertake to read you the whole from beginning to end, with the prologue and epilogue, and allow time for the music between the acts.

Mrs. D. I hope to see it on the stage next. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Dan. (*Dangle and Sneer come down, L.H. and R.H.*) Well, Sir Fretful, I wish you may be able to get rid as easily of the newspaper criticisms as you do of ours.—

Sir F. The newspapers!—sir, they are the most villainous—licentious—abominable—infernal—not that I ever read them—no—I make it a rule never to look into a newspaper.

Dan. You are quite right;—for it certainly must hurt an author of delicate feelings to see the liberties they take.

Sir F. No!—quite the contrary;—their abuse is, in fact, the best panegyric; I like it of all things.—An author's reputation is only in danger from their support.

Sneer. Why, that's true;—and that attack now on you the other day—

Sir F. What? where?

Dan. Aye, you mean in a paper of Thursday; it was completely ill-natur'd to be sure.

Sir F. O, so much the better;—ha! ha! ha!—I wouldn't have it otherwise.

Dan. Certainly it is only to be laugh'd at; for—

Sir F. You don't happen to recollect what the fellow said, do you?

Sneer. Pray, Dangle;—Sir Fretful seems a little anxious—

Sir F. O lud, no!—anxious,—not I,—not the least.—I—but one may as well hear you know.

Dan. Sneer, do *you* recollect?—make out something.

(*Aside.*)

Sneer. I will. (*To Dangle.*)—Yes, yes, I remember perfectly.

Sir F. Well, and pray now;—not that it signifies;—what might the gentleman say?

Sneer. Why, he roundly asserts that you have not the slightest invention, or original genius whatever; though you are the greatest traducer of all other authors living.

Sir F. Ha! ha! ha!—very good!

Sneer. That as to comedy, you have not one idea of your own, he believes, even in your common place-book,—where stray jokes, and pilfered witticisms are kept with as much method as the ledger of the lost and stolen office.

Sir F. Ha! ha! ha!—very pleasant!

Sneer. Nay, that you are so unlucky as not to have the skill even to *steal* with taste:—but that you glean from the

refuse of obscure volumes, where more judicious plagiarists have been before you; so that the body of your work is a composition of dregs and sediments,—like a bad tavern's worst wine.

Sir F. Ha! ha!

Sneer. In your more serious efforts, he says, your bombast would be less intolerable, if the thoughts were ever suited to the expression; but the homeliness of the sentiment stares thro' the fantastic incumbrance of its fine language, like a clown in one of the new uniforms!

Sir F. Ha! ha!

Sneer. That your occasional tropes and flowers suit the general coarseness of your stile, as tambour sprigs would a ground of linsey-woolsey; while your imitations of Shakespeare resemble the mimicry of Falstaff's page, and are about as near the standard of the original.

Sir F. Ha!—

Sneer. In short, that even the finest passages you steal are of no service to you; for the poverty of your own language prevents their assimilating; so that they lie on the surface like lumps of marl on a barren moor, encumbering what it is not in their power to fertilize!—

Sir F. (*After great agitation.*)—Now another person would be vex'd at this.

Sneer. Oh! but I wou'dn't have told you, only to divert you.

Sir F. I know it,—I *am* diverted,—ha! ha! ha!—not the least invention! ha! ha! ha! very good!—very good!

Sneer. Yes,—no genius! ha! ha! ha!

Dan. A severe rogue! ha! ha! ha! but you are quite right, Sir Fretful, never to read such nonsense.

Sir F. To be sure;—for if there is any thing to one's praise, it is a foolish vanity to be gratified at it, and if it is abuse,—why one is always sure to hear of it from one damn'd good-natured friend or another!

Enter SERVANT, L.H.

Serv. Mr. Puff, sir, has sent word that the last rehearsal is to be this morning, and that he'll call on you presently.

Dan. That's true—I shall certainly be at home. [*Exit Servant, L.H.*] Now, Sir Fretful, if you have a mind to have justice done you in the way of answer,—egad, Mr. Puff's your man.

Sir F. Pshaw! sir, why should I wish to have it answered, when I tell you I am pleased at it?

Dan. True, I had forgot that. But I hope you are not fretted at what Mr. Sneer—

Sir F. Zounds! no, Mr. Dangle, don't I tell you these things never fret me in the least.

Dan. Nay I only thought—

Sir F. And let me tell you, Mr. Dangle 'tis damn'd affronting in you to suppose that I am hurt, when I tell you I am not.

Sneer. But why so warm, Sir Fretful?

Sir F. Gadslife! Mr. Sneer, you are as absurd as Dangle; how often must I repeat it to you, that nothing can vex me but your supposing it possible for me to mind the damn'd nonsense you have been repeating to me!—and let me tell you, if you continue to believe this, you must mean to insult me, gentlemen; and then your disrespect will affect me no more than the newspaper criticisms;—and I shall treat it—with exactly the same calm indifference and philosophic contempt;—and so your servant. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Sneer. Ha! ha! ha! poor sir Fretful! now will he go and vent his philosophy in anonymous abuse of all modern critics and authors; but, Dangle, you must get your friend Puff to take me to the rehearsal of his tragedy.

Dan. I'll answer for't; he'll thank you for desiring it. But come and help me to judge of this musical family; they are recommended by people of consequence, I assure you.

Sneer. I am at your disposal the whole morning;—but I thought you had been a decided critic in music, as well as in literature.

Dan. So I am—but I have a bad ear. I'faith, Sneer, tho', I am afraid we were a little too severe on sir Fretful;—tho' he is my friend.

Sneer. Why, 'tis certain, that unnecessarily to mortify the vanity of any writer, is a cruelty which mere dullness never can deserve; but where a base and personal malignity usurps the place of literary emulation, the aggressor deserves neither quarter nor pity.

Dan. That's true, egad!—tho' he's my friend!

Re-enter SERVANT, L.H.

Serv. Mr. Puff, sir.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Dan. My dear Puff!

Enter PUFF, L.H.

Puff. My-dear Dangle, how is it with you?

Dan. Mr. Sneer, give me leave to introduce Mr. Puff to you.

Puff. Mr. Sneer is this? (*Crosses to Centre.*) Sir, he is a gentleman whom I have long panted for the honour of knowing—a gentleman whose critical talents and transcendant judgment—

Sneer. Dear sir—

Dan. Nay, don't be modest, Sneer, my friend Puff only talks to you in the style of his profession.

Sneer. His profession!

Puff. Yes, sir; I make no secret of the trade I follow—among friends and brother authors, Dangle knows I love to be frank on the subject, and to advertise myself *viva voce*.—I am, sir, a practitioner in panegyric, or to speak more plainly—a professor of the art of puffing, at your service,—or any body else's.

Sneer. Sir, you are very obliging! I believe, Mr. Puff, I have often admired your talents in the daily prints.

Puff. Yes, sir, I flatter myself I do as much business in that way as any six of the fraternity in town;—devilish hard work all the summer—friend Dangle! never worked harder!—but harkee,—the winter managers were a little sore I believe.

Dan. No—I believe they took it all in good part—

Puff. Aye!—then that must have been affectation in them; for egad, there were some of the attacks which there was no laughing at!

Sneer. Aye, the humorous ones;—but I should think Mr. Puff, that authors would in general be able to do this sort of work for themselves.

Puff. Why yes—but in a clumsy way.—Besides, we look on that as an encroachment, and so take the opposite side.—I dare say now you conceive half the very civil paragraphs and advertisements you see, to be written by the parties concerned, or their friends?—no such thing—nine out of ten, manufactured by me in the way of business.

Sneer. Indeed!

Puff. Even the auctioneers now—the auctioneers I say, tho' the rogues have lately got some credit for their language—not an article of the merit their's!—take them out of their

pulpits, and they are as dull as catalogues!—no, sir;—’twas I first enrich’d their style—’twas I first taught them to crowd their advertisements with panegyrical superlatives, each epithet rising above the other—like the bidders in their own auction-rooms!—from *me* they learn’d to inlay their phraseology with variegated chips of exotic metaphor;—by *me* too their inventive faculties were called forth. Yes, sir, by *me* they were instructed to clothe ideal walls with gratuitous fruits;—to insinuate obsequious rivulets into visionary groves;—to teach courteous shrubs to nod their approbation of the grateful soil! or on emergencies to raise upstart oaks, where there never had been an acorn; to create a delightful vicinage without the assistance of a neighbour; or fix the temple of Hygeia in the fens of Lincolnshire!

Dan. I am sure you have done them infinite service; for now, when a gentleman is ruined, he parts with his house with some credit.

Sneer. Service! if they had any gratitude, they would erect a statue to him; they would figure him as a presiding Mercury, the god of traffic and fiction, with a hammer in his hand instead of a caduceus. But pray, Mr. Puff, what first put you on exercising your talents in this way.

Puff. Egad, sir—sheer necessity—the proper parent of an art so nearly allied to invention: you must know, Mr. Sneer, that from the first time I tried my hand at an advertisement, my success was such, that for some time after, I led a most extraordinary life indeed!

Sneer. How, pray?

Puff. Sir, I supported myself two years entirely by my misfortunes.

Sneer. By your misfortunes!

Puff. Yes, sir, assisted by long sickness, and other occasional disorders; and a very comfortable living I had of it.

Sneer. From sickness and misfortunes!—you practised as a doctor, and attorney at once!

Puff. No, egad; both maladies and miseries were my own.

Sneer. Hey! what the plague!

Dan. ’Tis true, i’ faith.

Puff. Harkee!—by advertisements—‘To the charitable and humane!’ and ‘To those whom Providence hath blessed with affluence!’

Sneer. Oh,—I understand you.

Puff. And, in truth, I deserved what I got; for I suppose

never man went through such a series of calamities in the same space of time!—sir, I was five times made a bankrupt, and reduced from a state of affluence, by a train of unavoidable misfortunes! then, sir, though a very industrious tradesman, I was twice burnt out, and lost my little all, both times!—I lived upon those fires a month. I soon after was confined by a most excruciating disorder, and lost the use of my limbs!—that told very well; for I had the case strongly attested, and went about to collect the subscriptions myself.

Dan. Egad, I believe that was when you first call'd on me—

Puff. In November last?—O no!—I was at that time a close prisoner in the Marshalsea, for a debt benevolently contracted to serve a friend!—I was afterwards, twice tapped for a dropsy, which declined into a very profitable consumption!—I was then reduced to—O no—then, I became a widow with six helpless children,—after having had eleven husbands pressed, and being left every time eight months gone with child, and without money to get me into a hospital!

Sneer. And you bore all with patience, I make no doubt?

Puff. Why, yes,—tho' I made some occasional attempts at *felo de se*; but as I did not find those *rash actions* answer, I left off killing myself very soon.—Well, sir,—at last, what with bankruptcies, fires, gout, dropsies, imprisonments, and other valuable calamities, having got together a pretty handsome sum, I determined to quit a business which had always gone rather against my conscience, and in a more liberal way still to indulge my talents for fiction and embellishment, thro' my favourite channels of diurnal communication;—and so, sir, you have my history.

Sneer. Most obligingly communicative indeed; and your confession if published, might certainly serve the cause of true charity, by rescuing the most useful channels of appeal to benevolence from the cant of imposition.—But surely Mr. Puff, there is no great *mystery* in your present profession?

Puff. Mystery! sir, I will take upon me to say, the matter was never scientifically treated, nor reduced to rule before.

Sneer. Reduced to rule?

Puff. O lud, sir! you are very ignorant, I am afraid.—Yes, sir,—Puffing is of various sorts—the principal are, the puff direct—the puff preliminary—the puff collateral—the puff collusive, and the puff oblique, or puff by implication.—

These all assume, as circumstances require, the various forms of 'letter to the editor'—'occasional anecdote'—'impartial critique'—'observation from a correspondent,'—or 'advertisement from the party.'

Sneer. The puff direct, I can conceive—

Puff. O yes, that's simple enough,—for instance—a new comedy or farce is to be produced at one of the theatres (though by the bye they don't bring out half what they ought to do.) The author, suppose Mr. Smatter, or Mr. Dapper—or any particular friend of mine—very well; the day before it is to be performed, I write an account of the manner in which it was received—I have the plot from the author,—and only add—characters strongly drawn—highly coloured—hand of a master—fund of genuine lamour—mine of invention—neat dialogue—attic salt! then for the performance—Mr. Dodd was astonishingly great in the character of Sir Harry! that universal and judicious actor, Mr. Palmer, perhaps never appeared to more advantage than in the Colonel; but it is not in the power of language to do justice to Mr. King?—indeed he more than merited those repeated bursts of applause which he drew from a most brilliant and judicious audience! as to the scenery—the miraculous power of Mr. De Louthembourg's pencil are universally acknowledged!—in short, we are at a loss which to admire most,—the unrivalled genius of the author, the great attention and liberality of the managers,—the wonderful abilities of the painter, or the incredible exertions of all the performers!

Sneer. That's pretty well indeed, sir.

Puff. O cool—quite cool—to what I sometimes do.

Sneer. And do you think there are any who are influenced by this?

Puff. O, lud! yes, sir;—the number of those who undergo the fatigue of judging for themselves is very small indeed!

Sneer. Well, sir,—the puff preliminary.

Puff. O that, sir, does well in the form of a *caution*.—In a matter of gallantry now—Sir Flimsy Gossamer, wishes to be well with Lady Fanny Fete—he applies to me—I open trenches for him with a paragraph in the *Morning Post*.—It is recommended to the beautiful and accomplished Lady F. four stars F dash E to be on her guard against that dangerous character, Sir F dash G; who, however pleasing and insinuating

his manners may be, is certainly not remarkable for the *constancy of his attachments!*—in italics.—Here you see, Sir Flimsy Gossamer is introduced to the particular notice of Lady Fanny;—who, perhaps never thought of him before,—she finds herself publicly cautioned to avoid him, which naturally makes her desirous of seeing him;—the observation of their acquaintance causes a pretty kind of mutual embarrassment, this produces a sort of sympathy of interest,—which, if Sir Flimsy is unable to improve effectually, he at least gains the credit of having their names mentioned together, by a particular set, and in a particular way,—which nine times out of ten is the full accomplishment of modern gallantry.

Dan. Egad, Sneer, you will be quite an adept in the business.

Puff. Now, sir, the puff collateral is much used as an appendage to advertisements, and may take the form of anecdote.—Yesterday, as the celebrated George Bon-Mot was sauntering down St. James's Street, he met the lively Lady Mary Myrtle, coming out of the Park,—‘ Good God, Lady Mary, I’m surprised to meet you in a white jacket,—for I expected never to have seen you, but in a full trimmed uniform, and a light-horseman’s cap!’—‘ heavens, George, where could you have learned that?’—‘ why,’ replied the wit, ‘ I just saw a print of you, in a new publication, called the Camp Magazine, which, by the bye, is a devillish clever thing,—and is sold at No. 3, on the right hand of the way, two doors from the printing-office, the corner of Ivy Lane, Paternoster Row, price only one shilling!’

Sneer. Very ingenious indeed.

Puff. But the puff collusive is the newest of any; for it acts in the disguise of determined hostility.—It is much used by bold booksellers and enterprising poets.—An indignant correspondent observes—that the new poem, called Beelzebub’s Cotillion, or Proserpine’s Fete Champetre, is one of the most unjustifiable performances he ever read! the severity with which certain characters are handled is quite shocking! and as there are many descriptions in it too warmly coloured for female delicacy, the shameful avidity with which this piece is bought by all people of fashion, is a reproach on the taste of the times, and a disgrace to the delicacy of the age!—here you see the two strongest induce-

ments are held forth:—first, that nobody ought to read it;—and secondly, that every body buys it; on the strength of which, the publisher boldly prints the tenth edition, before he had sold ten of the first; and then establishes it by threatening himself with the pillory, or absolutely indicting himself for scan. mag.!

Dan. Ha! ha! ha!—'gad I know it is so.

Puff. As to the puff oblique, or puff by implication, it is too various and extensive to be illustrated by an instance; it attracts in titles, and presumes in patents; it lurks in the *limitation* of a subscription, and invites in the assurance of crowd and incommodation at public places; it delights to draw forth concealed merit, with a most disinterested assiduity; and sometimes wears a countenance of smiling censure and tender reproach.—It has a wonderful memory for parliamentary debates, and will often give the whole speech of a favoured member with the most flattering accuracy. But, above all, it is a great dealer in reports and suppositions. It has the earliest intelligence of intended preferences that will reflect *honour* on the *patrons*; and embryo promotions of modest gentlemen,—who know nothing of the matter themselves. It can hint a ribband for implied services, in the air of a common report; and with the carelessness of a casual paragraph, suggest officers into commands,—to which they have no pretension but their wishes. This, sir, is the last principal class of the art of puffing,—an art which I hope you will now agree with me, is of the highest dignity:—yielding a tablature of benevolence and public spirit; befriending equally trade, gallantry, criticism, and politics: the applause of genius! the register of charity! the triumph of heroism! the self-defence of contractors! the fame of orators!—and the gazette of ministers!

Sneer. Sir I am completely a convert both to the importance and ingenuity of your profession; and now, sir, there is but one thing which can possibly increase my respect for you, and that is, your permitting me to be present this morning, at the rehearsal of your new tragedy—

Puff. Hush, for heaven's sake.—*My* tragedy!—egad, Dangle, I take this very ill; you know how apprehensive I am of being known to be the author.

Dan. I'faith I would not have told; but it's in the papers, and your name at length,—in the Morning Chronicle

Puff. Ah! those damn'd editors never can keep a secret!—well, Mr. Sneer,—no doubt you will do me great honour—I shall be infinitely happy;—highly flattered—

Dan. I believe it must be near the time;—shall we go together?

Puff. No; (*Crosses to L.H.*) it will not be yet this hour, for they are always late at that theatre: besides, I must meet you there, for I have some little matters here to send to the papers, and a few paragraphs to scribble before I go. (*Looking at memorandums.*)—Here is 'a conscientious baker, on the subject of the army bread;' and 'a detester of visible brick-work, in favour of the new invented stucco;' both in the style of Junius, and promised for to-morrow.—The Thames navigation too is at a stand.—Miso-mud or Anti-shoal must go to work again directly.—Here too are some political memorandums I see; aye—to take Paul Jones, and get the Indiamen out of the Shannon—reinforce Byron—compel the Dutch to—so!—I must do that in the evening papers, or reserve it for the Morning Herald, for I know that I have undertaken to-morrow, besides, to establish the unanimity of the fleet in the Public Advertiser, and to shoot Charles Fox in the Morning Post—So, egad, I ha'n't a moment to lose!

Dan. Well!—we'll meet in the Green Room.

[*Exeunt Puff, L.H.—Dangle and Sneer, R.H.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Theatre.*

Enter DANGLE, PUFF, and SNEER, as before the Curtain,
L.H. *Dangle R.H of Puff, and Sneer, L.H.*

Puff. No, no, sir; what Shakspeare says of actors may be better applied to the purpose of plays; *they* ought to be 'the abstract and brief chronicles of the times.' Therefore when history, and particularly the history of our own country, furnishes any thing like a case in point, to

the time in which an author writes, if he knows his own interest, he will take advantage of it; so, sir, I call my tragedy ‘The Spanish Armada;’ and have laid the scene before Tilbury Fort.

Sneer. A most happy thought certainly!

Dan. Egad it was;—I told you so.—But pray now I don’t understand how you have contrived to introduce any love into it.

Puff. Love! oh nothing so easy: for it is a received point among poets, that where history gives you a good heroic out-line for a play, you may fill up with a little love at your own discretion: in doing which, nine times out of ten, you only make up a deficiency in the private history of the times. Now I rather think I have done this with some success.

Sneer. No scandal about Queen Elizabeth, I hope?

Puff. O lud! no, no,—I only suppose the governor of Tilbury Fort’s daughter to be in love with the son of the Spanish admiral.

Sneer. Oh, is that all!

Dan. Excellent, i’faith! I see it at once.—But won’t this appear rather improbable?

Puff. To be sure it will—but what the plague! a play is not to show occurrences that happen every day, but things just so strange, that tho’ they never *did*, they might happen.

Sneer. Certainly nothing is unnatural, that is not physically impossible.

Puff. Very true—and for that matter Don Ferolo Whiskerandos—for that’s the lover’s name, might have been over here in the train of the Spanish ambassador; or Tilburina, for that is the lady’s name, might have been in love with him, from having heard his character, or seen his picture; or from knowing that he was the last man in the world she ought to be in love with—or for any other good female reason.—However, sir, the fact is, that tho’ she is but a knight’s daughter, egad she is in love like any princess!

Dan. Poor young lady; I feel for her already! for I can conceive how great the conflict must be between her passion and her duty; her love for her country, and her love for Don Ferolo Whiskerandos!

Puff. O amazing!—her poor susceptible heart is swayed to and fro, by contending passions like—

Enter UNDER PROMPTER, L.H.

Under P. Sir, the scene is set, and every thing is ready to begin if you please.

Puff. Egad; then we'll lose no time.

Under P. Tho' I believe, sir, you will find it very short, for all the performers have profited by the kind permission you granted them.

Puff. Hey! what!

Under P. You know, sir, you gave them leave to cut out or omit whatever they found heavy or unnecessary to the plot, and I must own they have taken very liberal advantage of your indulgence.

Puff. Well, well.—They are in general very good judges; and I know I am luxuriant.—Now, Mr. Hopkins, as soon as you please.

Under P. (*To the music.*) Gentlemen, will you play a few bars of something, just to—

Puff. Aye, that's right,—for as we have the scenes, and dresses, egad, we'll go to't, as if it was the first night's performance; but you need not mind stopping between the acts.

[*Exit Under Prompter, L.H.*

(*Orchestra plays.—Then the Bell rings.*)

Soh! stand clear, gentlemen.—Now you know there will be a cry of down!—down!—hats off!—silence!—Then up curtain, and let us see what our painters have done for us.

(*The Curtain rises, and discovers Tilbury Fort.—Two Centinels asleep, R.H. and L.H.*)

Dan. Tilbury Fort!—very fine indeed!

Puff. Now, what do you think I open with?

Sneer. Faith, I can't guess—

Puff. A clock—Hark!—(*Clock strikes.*) I open with a clock striking, to beget an awful attention in the audience;—it also marks the time, which is four o'clock in the morning, and saves a description of the rising sun, and a great deal about gilding the Eastern hemisphere.

Dan. But pray, are the centinels to be asleep?

Puff. Fast as watchmen.

Sneer. Isn't that odd, tho' at such an alarming crisis?

Puff. To be sure it is,—but smaller things must give way to a striking scene at the opening; that's a rule. And the case is, that two great men are coming to this very spot to begin the piece; now, it is not to be supposed they would open their lips, if these fellows were watching them, so, egad, I must either have sent them off their posts, or set them asleep.

Sneer. O, that accounts for it!—But tell us, who are these coming?

Puff. These are they,—Sir Walter Raleigh, and Sir Christopher Hatton.—You'll know Sir Christopher, by his turning out his toes,—famous you know for his dancing. I like to preserve all the little traits of character. Now attend. (*Dan. and Sneer seated, l.h.*)

Enter SIR WALTER RALEIGH and SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON, R.H.

'*Sir C.* True, gallant Raleigh!'—

Dan. What, they had been talking before?

Puff. O, yes; all the way as they came along.—I beg pardon, gentlemen, (*To the Actors.*) but these are particular friends of mine, whose remarks may be of great service to us. Don't mind interrupting them whenever any thing strikes you. (*To Sneer and Dangle.*)

'*Sir C.* True, gallant Raleigh!

'But O, thou champion of thy country's fame,

'There *is* a question which I yet must ask;

'A question, which I never ask'd before;—

'What mean these mighty armaments!

'This general muster? And this throng of chiefs?'

Sneer. Pray, Mr. Puff, how came Sir Christopher Hatton never to ask that question before?

Puff. What, before the play began? How the plague could he?

Dan. That's true i'faith!

Puff. But you will hear what he thinks of the matter.

'*Sir C.* Alas, my noble friend, when I behold

'Yon tented plains in martial symmetry

'Array'd—When I count o'er yon glittering lines

‘ Of crested warriors, where the proud steeds neigh,
 ‘ And valour-breathing trumpet’s shrill appeal,
 ‘ Responsive vibrates on my list’ning ear;
 ‘ When virgin majesty herself I view,
 ‘ Like her protecting Pallas veil’d in steel,
 ‘ With graceful confidence exhort to arms!
 ‘ When briefly all I hear or see bears stamp
 ‘ Of martial vigilance, and stern defence,
 ‘ I cannot but surmise.—Forgive, my friend,
 ‘ If the conjecture’s rash; I cannot but
 ‘ Surmise.—The state some danger apprehends!’

Sneer. A very cautious conjecture that.

Puff. Yes, that’s his character; not to give an opinion, but on secure grounds; now then.

‘ *Sir W.* O, most accomplished Christopher!’

Puff. He calls him by his christian name, to show that they are on the most familiar terms.

‘ *Sir W.* O most accomplish’d Christopher, I find

‘ Thy staunch sagacity still tracks the future,

‘ In the fresh print of the o’ertaken past.’

Puff. Figurative!

‘ *Sir W.* Thy fears are just.

‘ *Sir C.* But where? Whence? When? and What?

‘ The danger is:—methinks I fain would learn.

‘ *Sir W.* You know, my friend, scarce two revolving
 ‘ suns,

‘ And three revolving moons, have closed their course,

‘ Since haughty Philip, in despite of peace,

‘ With hostile hand hath struck at England’s trade.

‘ *Sir C.* I know it well.

‘ *Sir W.* Philip, you know, is proud Iberia’s king!

‘ *Sir C.* He is.

‘ *Sir W.* His subjects in base bigotry

‘ And Catholic oppression held,—while we,

‘ You know, the Protestant persuasion hold.

‘ *Sir C.* We do.

‘ *Sir W.* You know beside,—his boasted armament,

‘ The fam’d Armada,—by the Pope baptized,

‘ With purpose to invade these realms—

‘ *Sir C.* Is failed,

‘ Our last advices so report.

- ‘ *Sir W.* While the Iberian admiral’s chief hope,
 ‘ His darling son—
 ‘ *Sir C.* Ferolo Whiskerandos hight—
 ‘ *Sir W.* The same ;—by chance a pris’ner hath been
 ‘ ta’en,
 ‘ And in this fort of Tilbury—
 ‘ *Sir C.* Is now
 ‘ Confin’d ;—’tis true, and oft from yon tall turret top
 ‘ I’ve mark’d the youthful Spaniard’s haughty mien
 ‘ Unconquer’d, tho’ in chains.—
 ‘ *Sir W.* You also know’—

Dan. Mr. Puff, as he *knows* all this, why does Sir Walter go on telling him ?

Puff. But the audience are not supposed to know any thing of the matter, are they ?

Sneer. True, but I think you manage ill : for there certainly appears no reason why Sir Walter should be so communicative.

Puff. For, egad now, that is one of the most ungrateful observations I ever heard,—for the less inducement he has to tell all this, the more I think you ought to be oblig’d to him ; for I am sure you’d know nothing of the matter without it.

Dan. That’s very true, upon my word.

Puff. But you will find he was *not* going on.

- ‘ *Sir C.* Enough, enough,—’tis plain,—and I no more
 ‘ Am in amazement lost !’—

Puff. Here, now you see, Sir Christopher did not in fact ask any one question for his own information.

Sneer. No, indeed :—his has been a most disinterested curiosity.

Dan. Really, I find, we are very much oblig’d to them both.

Puff. To be sure you are. Now then for the commander in chief, the earl of Leicester ! who, you know, was no favourite but of the queen’s.—We left off—‘ in amazement lost !’—

- ‘ *Sir C.* Am in amazement lost.—

- ‘ But, see where noble Leicester comes ! supreme
 ‘ In honours and command.

- ‘ *Sir W.* And yet methinks
 ‘ At such a time, so perilous, so fear’d,
 ‘ That staff might well become an abler grasp.

‘ *Sir C.* And so, by heav’n! think I; but soft, he’s
‘ here!’

Puff. Aye, they envy him.

Sneer. But who are those with him?

Puff. O! very valiant knights; one is the governor of the fort, the other the master of the horse.—And now, I think you shall hear some better language: I was obliged to be plain and intelligible in the first scene, because there was so much matter of fact in it; but now, i’faith, you have trope, figure, and metaphor, as plentiful as noun-substantives.

Enter EARL OF LEICESTER, *the* GOVERNOR, *and others*, R.H.

‘ *Leic.* How’s this, my friends! is’t thus your new-fledg’d
‘ zeal

‘ And plumed valour moulds in roosted sloth?

‘ Why dimly glimmers that heroic flame,

‘ Whose redd’ning blaze by patriot spirit fed,

‘ Should be the beacon of a kindling realm?

‘ Can the quick current of a patriot heart,

‘ Thus stagnate in a cold and weedy converse,

‘ Or freeze in tideless inactivity?

‘ No! rather let the fountain of your valour

‘ Spring thro’ each stream of enterprize,

‘ Each petty channel of conducive daring,

‘ Till the full torrent of your foaming wrath

‘ O’erwhelm the flats of sunk hostility!’

Puff. There it is,—follow’d up!

‘ *Sir W.* No more! the fresh’ning breath of thy rebuke

‘ Hath fill’d the swelling canvass of our souls!

‘ And thus, tho’ fate should cut the cable of

(*All take hands.*)

‘ Our topmost hopes, in friendship’s closing line

‘ We’ll grapple with despair, and if we fall,

‘ We’ll fall in glory’s wake!

‘ *Leic.* There spoke Old England’s genius!

‘ Then, are we all resolv’d?

‘ *All.* We are;—all resolv’d.

‘ *Leic.* To conquer,—or be free

‘ *All.* To conquer,—or be free.

‘ *Leic.* All?

‘ *All.* All.’

Dan. *Nem. con.* egad!

Puff. O yes, where they *do* agree on the stage, their unanimity is wonderful!

‘*Leic.* Then, let’s embrace;—and

‘Now’—

Sneer. What the plague, is he going to pray?

Puff. Yes, hush!—in great emergencies, there is nothing like a prayer!

‘*Leic.* O mighty Mars!’

(*Kneels.*)

Dan. But why should he pray to *Mars*?

Puff. Hush!

‘*Leic.* If in thy homage bred,

‘Each point of discipline I’ve still observ’d;

‘Nor but by due promotion, and the right

‘Of service, to the rank of major-general

‘Have ris’n; assist thy votary now!

‘*Gov.* Yet do not rise,—hear me!’

‘*Mas. of H.* And me!

‘*Knight.* And me!

‘*Sir W.* And me!

‘*Sir C.* And me!’

} (*They all Kneel.*)

Puff. Now, pray altogether.

‘*All.* Behold thy votaries submissive beg,

‘That thou wilt deign to grant them all they ask;

‘Assist them to accomplish all their ends,

‘And sanctify whatever means they use

‘To gain them!’

Sneer. A very orthodox quintetto!

Puff. Vastly well, gentlemen.—Is that well managed or not? Have you such a prayer as that on the stage?

Sneer. Not exactly.

Leic. (*To Puff.*) But, Sir, you hav’n’t settled how we are to get off here.

Puff. You could not go off kneeling, could you?

Sir W. (*To Puff.*) O no, sir! impossible!

Puff. It would have a good effect i’faith, if you could! exeunt praying!—Yes, and would vary the established mode of springing off with a glance at the pit.

Sneer. O never mind, so as you get them off, I’ll answer for it the audience wont care how.

Puff. Well then, repeat the last line standing, and go off the old way.

'*All.* And sanctify whatever means they use to gain them.'
[*Exeunt*, R.H.]

Dan. Bravo! a fine exit.

Sneer. Well, really Mr. Puff—

Puff. Stay a moment.—

The CENTINELS get up.

'*1st. Cen.* All this shall to Lord Burleigh's ear.

'*2d. Cen.* 'Tis meet it should.' [*Exeunt Centinels*, R.H.]

Dan. Hey!—why, I thought those fellows had been asleep?

Puff. Only a pretence, there's the art of it; they were spies of Lord Burleigh's.

Sneer. But isn't it odd, they were never taken notice of, not even by the commander in chief.

Puff. O lud, sir, if people who want to listen, or overhear, were not always conniv'd at in a tragedy, there would be no carrying on any plot in the world.

Dan. That's certain!

Puff. But take care, my dear Dangle, the morning gun is going to fire. (*Cannon fires.*)

Dan. Well, that will have a fine effect.

Puff. I think so, and helps to realize the scene.—(*Cannon twice.*)—What the plague!—*three* morning guns!—there never is but one!—aye, this is always the way at the theatre.—Give these fellows a good thing, and they never know when to have done with it. You have no more cannon to fire?

Prom. (*From within.*) No, sir.

Puff. Now then, for soft music.

Sneer. Pray what's that for?

Puff. It shews that Tilburina is coming; nothing introduces you a heroine like soft music.—Here she comes.

Dan. And her confidant, I suppose?

Puff. To be sure: here they are;—inconsolable to the minuet in Ariadne!
(*Soft Music.*)

Enter TILBURINA and CONFIDANT, R.H.

'*Til.* Now has the whispering breath of gentle morn
' Bad nature's voice, and nature's beauty rise;

' While orient Phœbus with unborrow'd hues,
 ' Clothes the wak'd loveliness which all night slept,
 ' In heav'nly drapery ! Darkness is fled.
 ' Now flowers unfold their beauties to the sun,
 ' And blushing, kiss the beam he sends to wake them,
 ' The strip'd carnation, and the guarded rose,
 ' The vulgar wallflow'r, and smart gillyflower,
 ' The polyanthus mean,—the dapper daisy,
 ' Sweet William and sweet marjoram,—and all
 ' The tribe of single and of double pinks !
 ' Now too, the feather'd warblers tune their notes
 ' Around to charm the list'ning grove.—The lark !
 ' The linnet ! chaffinch ! bullfinch ! goldfinch ! greenfinch !
 ' —But, O to me, no joy can they afford !
 ' Nor rose, nor wallflow'r, nor smart gillyflower,
 ' Nor polyanthus mean, nor dapper daisy,
 ' Nor William sweet, nor marjoram,—nor lark,
 ' Linnet, nor all the finches of the grove !'

Puff. Your white handkerchief, madam.—

Til. I thought, sir, I wasn't to use that 'till ' heart-rending woe.'

' *Puff.* O yes, madam—at ' the finches of the grove,' if you please.

' *Til.* Nor lark,

' Linnet, nor all the finches of the grove !' (*Weeps.*)

Puff. Vastly well, madam !

Dan. Vastly well indeed !

' *Til.* For, O too sure, heart-rending woe is now

' The lot of wretched Tilburina !'

Dan. O !—'tis too much.

Sneer. Oh !—it is indeed.

' *Con.* Be comforted, sweet lady ;—for who knows

' But heav'n has yet some milk-white day in store.

' *Til.* Alas ! my gentle Nora,

' Thy tender youth as yet hath never mourn'd

' Love's fatal dart.—Else would'st thou know, that when

' The soul is sunk in comfortless despair,

' It cannot taste of merriment.'

Dan. That's certain.

' *Con.* But see where your stern father comes ;

' It is not meet that he should find you thus.'

Puff. Hey ! what the plague !—what a cut is here !—why,

what is become of the description of her first meeting with Don Whiskerandos? His gallant behaviour in the sea fight, and the simile of the canary bird?

Til. Indeed, sir, you'll find they will not be miss'd.

Puff. Very well.—Very well!

Til. The cue, ma'am, if you please.

' *Con.* It is not meet that he should find you thus.—

' *Til.* Thou counsell'st right, but 'tis no easy task.

' For bare-faced grief to wear a mask of joy.

Enter GOVERNOR, R.II.

' *Gov.* How's this?—In tears?—O Tilburina, shame!

' Is this a time for maudling tenderness,

' And Cupid's baby woes?—Hast thou not heard

' That haughty Spain's Pope-consecrated fleet

' Advances to our shores, while England's fate,

' Like a clipp'd guinea, trembles in the scale!

' *Til.* 'Then, is the crisis of *my* fate at hand!

' I see the fleet's approach!—I see'—

Puff. Now, pray, gentlemen, mind.—This is one of the most useful figures we tragedy writers have, by which a hero or heroine, in consideration of their being often obliged to overlook things that *are* on the stage, is allow'd to hear and see a number of things that are not.

Sneer. Yes;—a kind of poetical second-sight!

Puff. Yes;—now then, madam.

' *Til.* I see their decks

' Are clear'd!—I see the signal made!

' The line is form'd!—a cable's length asunder!

' I see the frigates station'd in the rear;

' And now, I hear the thunder of the guns!

' I hear the victor's shouts;—I also hear

' The vanquish'd groan!—and now 'tis smoke;—and now

' I see the loose sails shiver in the wind!

' I see—I see—what soon you'll see—

' *Gov.* Hold, daughter! peace! this love hath turn'd thy brain:

' The Spanish fleet thou *canst* not see—because

' —It is not yet in sight!

Dan. Egad tho', the governor seems to make no allowance for this poetical figure you talk of.

Puff. No, a plain matter-of-fact man;—that's his character.

' *Til.* But will you then refuse his offer ?

' *Gov.* I must—I will—I can—I ought—I do.

' *Til.* Think what a noble price.

' *Gov.* No more ;—you urge in vain.

' *Til.* His liberty is all he asks.'

Sneer. All *who* asks, Mr. Puff ! Who is—

' *Puff.* Egad, sir, I can't tell.—Here has been such cutting and slashing. I don't know where they have got to myself.

Til. Indeed, sir, you will find it will connect very well.

' —And your reward secure.'

Puff. O,—if they hadn't been so devilish free with their cutting here, you would have found that Don Whiskerandos has been tampering for his liberty, and has persuaded Tilburina to make this proposal to her father ;—and now pray observe the conciseness with which the argument is conducted. Egad, the *pro* and *con* goes as smart as hits in a fencing match. It is indeed a sort of small-sword logic, which we have borrowed from the French.

' *Til.* A retreat in Spain !

' *Gov.* Outlawry here !

' *Til.* Your daughter's prayer !

' *Gov.* Your father's oath !

' *Til.* My lover !

' *Gov.* My country !

' *Til.* Tilburina !

' *Gov.* England !

' *Til.* A title !

' *Gov.* Honour !

' *Til.* A pension !

' *Gov.* Conscience !

' *Til.* A thousand pounds !

' *Gov.* Hah ! thou hast touch'd me nearly !'

Puff. There you see;—she threw in *Tilburina*, Quick, parry cart with *England* !—Hah ! thrust in tierce a title—parried by honour—Hah ! a pension over the arm !—put by by conscience.—Then flankonade with a thousand pounds—and a palpable hit egad !

' *Til.* Canst thou—

' Reject the *suppliant*, and the *daughter* too ?

' *Gov.* No more ; I wou'd not hear thee plead in vain,

' The *father* softens,—but the *governor*

' Is fix'd !'

[*Crosses and Exit, L.H.*

Dan. Aye, that antithesis of persons—is a most establish'd figure.

‘ *Til.* ’Tis well,—hence then, fond hopes,

‘ —fond passion, hence ;

‘ Duty, behold, I am all over thine—

‘ *Whisk.* (*Without*, R.H.) Where is my love—my—

‘ *Til.* Ha !

Enter DON WHISKERANDOS, R.H.

‘ *Whisk.* My beauteous enemy !—

Puff. O, dear ma’am, you must start a great deal more than that ; consider, you had just determined in favour of duty,—when, in a moment, the sound of his voice revives your passion,—overthrows your resolution, destroys your obedience.—If you don’t express all that in your start,—you do nothing at all.

Til. Well, we’ll try again !

Dan. Speaking from within, has always a fine effect.

Sneer. Very.

‘ *Whisk.* My conquering Tilburina ! How ! is’t thus

‘ We meet ? Why are thy looks averse ! What means

‘ That falling tear,—that frown of boding woe ?

‘ Hah ! now indeed I am a prisoner !

‘ Yes, now I feel the galling weight of these

‘ Disgraceful chains,—which, cruel Tilburina !

‘ Thy doating captive gloried in before.—

‘ But thou art false, and Whiskerandos is undone !

‘ *Til.* O no ; how little dost thou know thy Tilburina !

‘ *Whisk.* Art thou then true ? Begone cares, doubts, and fears ;—

‘ I make you all a present to the winds ;

‘ And if the winds reject you,—try the waves.’

Puff. The wind, you know, is the established receiver of all stolen sighs, and cast-off griefs and apprehensions.

‘ *Til.* Yet must we part ?—Stern duty seals our doom :

‘ Though here I call yon conscious clouds to witness,

‘ Could I pursue the bias of my soul,

‘ All friends, all right of parents I’d disclaim,

‘ And thou, my Whiskerandos, should’st be father,

‘ And mother, brother, cousin, uncle, aunt,

‘ And friend to me !

' *Whisk*. O matchless excellence!—and must we part?

' Well, if—we must—we must—and in that case

' The less is said the better.'

Puff. Hey day! here's a cut!—What, are all the mutual protestations out?

Til. Now, pray, sir, don't interrupt us just here; you ruin our feelings.

Puff. Your feelings!—but, zounds, *my* feelings, ma'am!

Sneer. No; pray don't interrupt them.

' *Whisk*. One last embrace.—

' *Til*. Now,—farewell, for ever.

' *Whisk*. For ever!

' *Til*. Aye, for ever.' (*Going, R.H.*)

Puff. S'death and fury!—Gadslife! sir! Madam, if you go out without the parting look, you might as well dance out.—Here, here!

Con. But pray, sir, how am *I* to get off here?

Puff. You, pshaw! what the devil signifies how *you* get off! edge away at the top, or where you will.—(*Pushes the Confidant out.*) Now ma'am, you see—

Til. We understand you, sir.

' Aye, for ever.

' *Both*. Oh!——

[*Turning back, and Exeunt, Til. L.H. Whisk. R.H.*]

Drop Scene.

Enter UNDER PROMPTER, L.H.

Under P. Sir, the carpenter says it is impossible you can go to the park scene yet.

Puff. The park scene! No;—I mean the description scene here, in the wood.

Under P. Sir, the performers have cut it out.

Puff. Cut it out?

Under P. Yes, sir.

Puff. What! the whole account of queen Elizabeth?

Under P. Yes, sir.

Puff. And the description of her horse and side-saddle?

Under P. Yes, sir.

Puff. So, so, this is very fine indeed! Mr. Hopkins, how the plague could you suffer this?

Prompter. (*From within, L.H.*) Sir, indeed the pruning knife—

Puff. The pruning knife,—zounds the axe! why, here has been such lopping and topping, I shan't have the bare trunk of my play left presently.—Very well, sir—the performers must do as they please, but, upon my soul, I'll print it every word.

Sneer. That I would indeed.

Puff. Very well—sir—then we must go on;—zounds I would not have parted with the description of the horse!—Well, sir, go on.—Sir, it was one of the finest and most laboured things;—Very well, sir, let them go on;—there you had him and his accoutrements from the bit to the crupper;—very well, sir, we must go to the park scene.

Under P. Sir, there is the point;—the carpenters say, that unless there is some business put in here before the drop, they shan't have time to clear away the fort, or sink Gravesend and the river.

Puff. So! this is a pretty dilemma truly!—Gentlemen, you must excuse me;—these fellows will never be ready, unless I go and look after them myself.

Sneer. O dear sir;—these little things will happen—

Puff. To cut out this scene!—but I'll print it;—egad, I'll print it every word!

Enter a BEEFEATER, L.H. U.E.

Beef. Perdition catch my soul but *I* do love thee.'

Sneer. Haven't I heard that line before?

Puff. No, I fancy not—Where pray?

Dan. Yes, I think there is something like it in Othello.

Puff. Gad! now you put me in mind on't, I believe there is;—but that's of no consequence;—all that can be said is, that two people happened to hit on the same thought,—and Shakspeare made use of it first, that's all.

Sneer. Very true.

Puff. Now, sir, your soliloquy;—but speak more to the pit, if you please;—the soliloquy always to the pit, that's a rule.

Beef. Tho' hopeless love finds comfort in despair,

'It never can endure a rival's bliss!'

'But soft—I am observ'd.'

[*Exit Beefeater, R.11*]

Dan. That's a very short soliloquy.

Puff. Yes,—but it would have been a great deal longer if he had not been observed.

Sneer. A most sentimental Beefeater that, Mr. Puff.

Puff. Harkye—I would not have you be too sure that he *is* a Beefeater.

Sneer. What, a hero in disguise?

Puff. No matter,—I only give you a hint.—But now for my principal character.—Here he comes;—Lord Burleigh in person!—Pray, gentlemen, step this way;—softly—I only hope the Lord High Treasurer is perfect!—If he is but perfect—

Enter BURLEIGH, R.H. goes slowly to a chair and sits.

Sneer. Mr. Puff!

Puff. Hush! vastly well, sir! vastly well! a most interesting gravity!

Dan. What, isn't he to speak at all?

Puff. Egad, I thought you'd ask me that;—yes, it is a very likely thing,—that a minister in his situation, with the whole affairs of the nation on his head, should have time to talk;—but hush! or you'll put him out.

Sneer. Put him out! how the plague can that be, if he's not going to say any thing?

Puff. There's a reason! why, his part is to *think*, and how the plague! do you imagine he can *think* if you keep talking?

Dan. That's very true, upon my word!

[*Burleigh comes forward, shakes his head, and exit, R.H.*]

Sneer. He is very perfect indeed.—Now, pray what did he mean by that?

Puff. You don't take it?

Sneer. No; I don't upon my soul.

Puff. Why, by that shake of the head, he gave you to understand, that even tho' they had more justice in their cause, and wisdom in their measures,—yet, if there was not a greater spirit shewn on the part of the people,—the country would at last fall a sacrifice to the hostile ambition of the Spanish monarchy.

Sneer. The devil!—did he mean all that by shaking his head.

Puff. Every word of it;—if he shook his head as I taught him.

Dan. Ah! there certainly is a vast deal to be done on the stage by dumb shew, and expression of face, and a judicious author knows how much he may trust to it.

Sneer. O, here are some of our old acquaintance.

Enter SIR C. HATTON and RALEIGH, R.H.

‘ *Sir. C.* My niece, and *your* niece too !

‘ By heav’n! there’s witchcraft in’t.—He could not else

‘ Have gain’d their hearts.—But see where they approach ;

‘ Some horrid purpose low’ring on their brows !

‘ *Sir W.* Let us withdraw and mark them.’

(*They withdraw to the Side.*)

Sneer. What is all this?

Puff. Ah! here has been more pruning!—but the fact is, these two young ladies are also in love with Don Whiskerandos.—Now, gentlemen, this scene goes entirely for what we call situation and stage effect, by which the greatest applause may be obtained, without the assistance of language, sentiment, or character : pray mark !

Enter the Two Nieces, L.H. and R.H.

‘ 1 *Niece.* Ellena here !

‘ She is his scorn as much as I;—that is

‘ Some comfort still !’

Puff. O dear madam, you are not to say that to her face !
—*aside*, ma’am, *aside*.—The whole scene is to be *aside*.

‘ 1 *Niece.* She is his scorn as much as I;—that is

‘ Some comfort still ! (*Aside.*)

‘ 2 *Niece.* I know he prizes not Pollina’s love,

‘ But Tilburina lords it o’er his heart. (*Aside.*)

‘ 1 *Niece.* But see the proud destroyer of my peace.

‘ Revenge is all the good I’ve left. (*Aside.*)

‘ 2 *Niece.* He comes, the false disturber of my quiet.

‘ Now, vengeance, do thy worst.— (*Aside.*)

Enter WHISKERANDOS, R.H. U.E.

‘ *Whisk.* O, hateful liberty,—if thus in vain

‘ I seek my Tilburina !

‘ *Both Nieces.* And ever shalt !

(*Sir Christopher, and Sir Walter come forward.*)

‘ *Both.* Hold ! we will avenge you.

Whisk. Hold *you*—or see your nieces bleed !

(*The two Nieces draw their two daggers to strike Whiskerandos ; the two Uncles at the instant, with their two swords drawn, catch their two Nieces's arms, and turn the points of their swords to Whiskerandos, who immediately draws two daggers, and holds them to the two Nieces's bosoms.*)

Puff. There's situation for you ! there's an heroic group !—You see the ladies can't stab Whiskerandos ;—he durst not strike them for fear of their uncles ;—the uncles durst not kill him, because of their nieces.—I have them all at a dead lock !—for every one of them is afraid to let go first.

Sneer. Why, then they must stand there for ever.

Puff. So they would, if I hadn't a very fine contrivance for't.—Now mind—

Enter BEEFEATER, with his Halbert, R.H.

' *Beef.* In the queen's name I charge you all to drop
' Your swords and daggers !'

(*They drop their swords and daggers.*)

Sneer. That is a contrivance indeed.

Puff. Aye ;—in the queen's name.

' *Sir C.* Come niece !

' *Sir W.* Come niece !

(*Exeunt, with the two nieces, L.H.*)

' *Whisk.* What's he, who bids us thus renounce our guard ?

' *Beef.* Thou must do more,—renounce thy love !

' *Whisk.* Thou liest ;—base Beefeater !

' *Beef.* Ha ! hell ! the lie !

' By heav'n, thou'st rous'd the lion in my heart !

' Off yeoman's habit !—base disguise ! off ! off ! (*Discovers himself, by throwing off his upper dress, and appearing in a very fine waistcoat.*)

' Am I Beefeater now ?

' Or beams my crest as terrible as when

' In Biscay's bay I took thy captive sloop ?

Puff. There, egad ! he comes out to be the very captain of the privateer who had taken Whiskerandos prisoner ;—and was himself an old lover of Tilburina's.

Dan. Admirably manag'd indeed.

Puff. Now, stand out of their way.

‘ *Whisk.* I thank thee, Fortune ! that hast thus bestow’d
 ‘ A weapon to chastise this insolent.

(*Takes up one of the swords.*)

‘ *Beef.* I take thy challenge, Spaniard, and I thank
 ‘ Thee, Fortune, too !’

(*Takes up the other sword.*)

Dan. That’s excellently contrived ! it seems as if the two
 uncles had left their swords on purpose for them.

Puff. No, egad, they could not help leaving them.

‘ *Whisk.* Vengeance and Tilburina !

‘ *Beef.* Exactly so— (*They fight,—and after the usual
 number of wounds given, Whiskerandos falls.*)

‘ *Whisk.* O cursed parry !—that last thrust in tierce

‘ Was fatal ;—Captain, thou hast fenced well !

‘ And Whiskerandos quits this bustling scene

‘ For all eter—(*Dies.*)

‘ *Beef.* —nity—He would have added, but stern death

‘ Cut short his being, and the noun at once !’

Puff. O, my dear sir, you are too slow.—Now mind me.—
 Sir, shall I trouble you to die again ? (*Whisk. rises.*)

‘ *Whisk.* And Whiskerandos quits this bustling scene

‘ For all eter—

‘ *Beef.* —nity—He would have added—

Puff. No, sir,—that’s not it ;—once more if you please—

Whisk. I wish, sir,—you would practise this without me.—
 I can’t stay dying here all night.

Puff. Very well, we’ll go over it by and by :—I must hu-
 mour these gentlemen. [*Exit Whiskerandos, R.H.*]

‘ *Beef.* Farewell,—brave Spaniard ! and when next—

Puff. Dear sir, you needn’t speak that speech, as the body
 has walked off.

Beef. That’s true, sir—then I’ll join the fleet.

Puff. If you please. [*Exit Beefeater, R.H.*]

Now, who comes on ?—Tilburina ! stark mad, in white
 satin ?—

Sneer. Why in white satin ?

Puff. O Lord, sir,—when a heroine goes mad, she always
 goes into white satin ;—don’t she, Dangle ?

Dan. Always ;—it’s a rule.

Puff. Yes—here it is,—(*Looking at the book.*) ‘ Enter
 Tilburina stark mad, in white satin, and her confidant stark
 mad, in white linen.’

Enter TILBURINA and CONFIDANT, R.H. mad, according to costume.

Sneer. But what the deuce, is the confidant to be mad too?

Puff. To be sure she is;—the confidant is always to do whatever her mistress does; weep when she weeps, smile when she smiles, go mad when she goes mad.—Now madam confidant,—but keep your madness in the back ground, if you please.

• *Til.* The wind whistles—the moon rises—see,
• They have kill'd my squirrel in his cage!
• Is this a grasshopper!—Ha! no, it is my
• Whiskerandos—you shall not keep him—
• I know you have him in your pocket—
• An oyster may be cross'd in love!—Who says
• A whale's a bird?—Ha! did you call, my love?
• —He's here! He's there!—He's every where!
• Ah me! He's no where.'

[Exeunt Tilburina, and Confidant, R.H.]

Puff. There, do you ever desire to see any body madder than that?

Sneer. Never while I live!

Puff. You observed how she mangled the metre?

Dan. Yes,—egad, it was the first thing made me suspect she was out of her senses.

Sneer. And pray what becomes of her?

Puff. She is gone to throw herself into the sea to be sure;—and that brings us at once to the scene of action, and so to my catastrophe,—my sea-fight, I mean.

Sneer. What, you bring that in at last?

Puff. Yes,—yes;—you know my play is called the *Spanish Armada*, otherwise, egad, I have no occasion for the battle at all.—Now then for my magnificence!—my battle!—my noise!—and my procession!—You are all ready?

Prom. (Within.) Yes, sir.

Puff. Is the Thames drest?

Enter THAMES, L.H. with two Attendants.

Thames. Here I am, sir.

Puff. Very well indeed.—See, gentlemen, there's a river for you!—This is blending a little of the masque with my tragedy;—a new fancy, you know,—and very useful in my case; for as there *must be a procession*, I suppose 'Thames and all his tributary rivers to compliment Britannia with a fête in honour of the victory.

Sneer. But pray, who are those gentlemen in green with him?

Puff. Those?—Those are his banks.

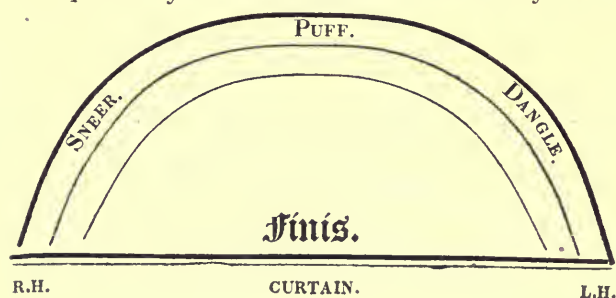
Sneer. His banks?

Puff. Yes, one crown'd with alders, and the other with a villa!—you take the allusions?—But hey! what the plague! you have got both your banks on one side.—Here, sir, come round.—Ever while you live, Thames, go between your banks. (*Bell rings.*)—There, soh! now for't!—Stand aside, my dear friends!—away Thames!

[*Exit Thames between his banks, R.H.*
(*Flourish of drums—trumpets—cannon, &c. &c. Scene changes to the sea—the fleets engage—the music plays 'Britons strike home.'—Spanish fleet destroyed by fire-ships, &c.—English fleet advances—music plays 'Rule Britannia.'—The procession of all the English rivers and their tributaries with their emblems, &c. begins with Handel's water music, ends with a chorus, to the march in Judas Maccabæus.—During this scene, Puff directs and applauds every thing—then.*)

Puff. Well, pretty well;—but not quite perfect;—so ladies and gentlemen, if you please, we'll rehearse this piece again to-morrow.

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.



W. Oxberry and Co. Printers, 8, White-Hart Yard.

Orberry's Edition.

CORIOLANUS;

OR, *THE ROMAN MATRON,*

A TRAGEDY;

By *W. Shakspeare.*

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED

WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

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London.

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Remarks.

CORIOLANUS.

Shakspeare was on no occasion the poet of manners ; his characters are citizens of the world, and never bear the stamp of any age or any country. He knew and laid open the human heart in its strengths, and in its weaknesses, paying very little attention to what may not improperly be termed the poetical costume of character. The patrician pride of Coriolanus, the vacillating thoughtlessness of the mob, the crafty democratic spirit of the tribunes, all these are qualities as general as the form of man himself ; to many readers this may appear a defect, but it is precisely from this, whether defect or virtue, that the language of Shakspeare can never grow antiquated till the world has lost its passions and its thinkings, its virtues and its vices. He speaks the general language of mankind, and therefore must be understood by all until that language ceases to be spoken.

The tragedy of Coriolanus is full of bustle, but the plots of Shakspeare were formed upon a plan and for a purpose, not very generally understood ; and never practised on the modern stage. The object of them is, for the most part, to exhibit his characters in every possible point of view ; and not to surprize by their wonders, or delight by their variety. Sometimes the plot may be said to grow out of the peculiar nature of the characters, and it is this very circumstance that forms one of the most prominent of Shakspeare's merits

Coriolanus is a masterly portrait ; his pride is the pride of habit and mind, and even his submission to his mother is a part and portion of the same nature ; it is moreover the only link that binds him to the spectator ; a being entirely removed above human virtues and human frailties could have little to interest man, but this

one softness in his character like a green spot in a desert, at once reconciles us to the surrounding ruggedness. In the last scene this is more particularly evident; and it might perhaps be attributed to Kemble as a defect, that he was too much the Roman, and too little the Coriolanus of Shakspeare. Yet while we notice this defect, let him not be robbed of his fair glory;—hallowed be the laurel on his brow; it has been justly earned, and will not lightly wither.

Menenius is one of those mixed characters that Shakspeare delighted to blend with tragedy, as being at once a relief and contrast; but Menenius, though excellent to the reader, is not very effective on the stage; the contrast he forms is too violent; he stands too much alone, and mingles like a stranger in the group.

The two Tribunes are people who have never died, and never can die; they are wandering Jews, destined to perpetual life; they are to be found in every city, unchanged in feature or habit; patriotism is their watch-word; but their hatred of patrician power is purely selfish; if Coriolanus is consul, “then our office may during his power, go sleep.” It is not Coriolanus the enemy of the people, but Coriolanus the enemy of their private interest whom they detest.

The people too, are no less true to nature; now firm, now cowardly; giving this moment, taking away the next;—trampled upon by brutal power—and deceived no less cruelly by their trusted tribunes—we at once hate and love, pity and despise them. Shakspeare with a masterly hand has here brought before us the two extremes of arbitrary power, and democratic insolence. The high pretensions of Coriolanus and his friends, who think earth made for their own use, and treat men as beasts, can only be matched by the servility, brutality and ignorance of the people. There is more sound, political instruction, to be gained from this single play, than from volumes of heavy essayists;—it is the very quintessence of history, with a commentary in every line so distinctly visible that he who runs may read.

Volumnia has more of what we might imagine Roman, than any of the other characters; her very love is pride; it is the

hero, the conqueror of Corioli she doats upon, and she contrasts well, though rather too strongly, with the tender and timid Virgilia.

There is less of poetical detail in this play, than is usual with Shakspeare ; but what it thus loses in beauty of language, it gains in rapidity of action. That it is not so popular as other of his works, is owing to the heroism of its subject ; or perhaps, to speak more correctly, from want of its domestic interest ;—it is indeed, a volume of wisdom, but that is a book which few can read and still fewer understand.

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation, is three hours. The first act, occupies the space of thirty minutes;—the second, fifty-five;—the third, thirty;—the fourth, twenty-five;—and the fifth, forty. The half-price commences, generally, about nine o'clock.

Stage Directions.

By R.H. is meant, Right Hand.
L.H. Left Hand.
S.E. Second Entrance.
U.E. Upper Entrance.
M.D. Middle Door.
D.F. Door in Flat.
R.H.D. Right Hand Door.
L.H.D. Left Hand Door.

Costume.

CAIUS MARCIUS.

First dress. Scarlet robe, white tunic, flesh dress complete, black sandals—Second dress.—Rich embroidered cuirass and lambarakins, scarlet mantle, red sandals, Roman sword and shield.—Third dress.—A white robe.—Fourth dress.—The Toga.—Fifth dress.—A dark purple mantle, with the cuirass and lambarakins.

MENENIUS.

Roman cuirass and lambarakins, red sandals and helmet.

SICINIUS.

Roman cuirass and lambarakins.

BRUTUS.

Roman tunic, robes, and sandals.

COMINIUS.

Ibid.

AUFIDIUS.

Roman cuirass and lambarakins, richly embroidered, scarlet mantle, red sandals, and helmet.

VOLUSIUS.

Roman cuirass and lambarakins, helmet.

VOLUMNIA.

A drab coloured cloth dress, to come up to the throat, with train and long sleeves, trimmed with plain gold lace, a long veil, and gold band.

VIRGILIA.

White, Ibid.

VALERIA.

Violet-coloured, Ibid. and white veil.

SERVILIA.

Dark,—ibid.

Persons Represented.



Covent-garden.

ROMANS.

<i>Caius Marcius Coriolanus</i>	Mr. Macready.
<i>Cominius</i>	Mr. Chapman.
<i>Menenius</i>	Mr. Blanchard.
<i>Appius</i>	Mr. Mears.
<i>Child</i>	Miss Norman.

PLEBEIANS.

<i>Sicinius</i>	Mr. Connor.
<i>Brutus</i>	Mr. Comer.
<i>Citizens</i>	Messrs. { Atkins. J. Russell. Barnes. Menage.
<i>Volumnia</i>	Mrs. Faucit.
<i>Virgilia</i>	Miss. Foote.
<i>Valeria</i>	Mrs. Yates.
<i>Servilia</i>	Mrs. Coates.

VOLSCIANS.

<i>Tullus Aufidius</i>	Mr. Egerton.
<i>Volusius</i>	Mr. Claremont.

*Senators, Lictors, Generals, Soldiers, Matrons,
Virgins, &c.*

CORIO LANUS

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Rome.*

A tumultuous noise within.—Enter a company of Mutinous Citizens, with Clubs, Staves, &c.

R.H.U.E.

1st. Cit. Before we proceed any further, hear me speak.

All. Speak, speak.

1st. Cit. You are all resolved rather to die, than to famish?

All. Resolv'd, resolv'd.

1st. Cit. First, you know, Caius Marcius is chief enemy to the people.

All. We know't, we know't.

1st. Cit. Let us kill him, and we'll have corn at our own price. Is't a verdict?

All. Let it be done ;—away, away !

2d. Cit. Onè word, good citizens. Would you proceed especially against Caius Marcius?

1st. Cit. Against him first : he's a very dog to the commonalty.

2d. Cit. Consider you what services he has done for his country?

1st. Cit. Very well ;—and we could be content to give him good report for't, but that he pays himself with being proud.

2d. Cit. Nay, but speak not maliciously.

1st. Cit. I say unto you, what he hath done famously, he did it to please his mother, and to be partly proud; which he is, even to the altitude of his virtue.

2d. Cit. What he cannot help in his nature, you account a vice in him: you must in no way say, he is covetous.

1st. Cit. If I must not, I need not be barren of accusations; he hath faults, with surplus, to tire in repetition. (*Shouts within, L.H.*) What shouts are these? the other side o'the city is risen! Why stay we prating here?—To the Capitol!—

All. Come, come. (*Shouts again, L.H.*)

Enter CAIUS MARCIUS, L.H. and MENENIUS, R.H.

Mar. What is the matter, you dissentious rogues?

1st. Cit. We have ever your good word.

Mar. He that will give good words to you, will flatter

Beneath abhorring. What would you have, you curs,
That like not peace, nor war? The one affrights
you,

The other makes you proud. He that trusts to you,
Where he should find you lions, finds you hares;
Where foxes, geese.

Hang ye!—trust ye!

With every minute you do change a mind,
And call him noble, that was now your hate,
Him vile, that was your garland. What's the matter,
That in these several places of the city
You cry against the noble senate, who,
Under the gods, keep you in awe, which else
Would feed on one another?—What's their seeking?

(*To Menenius.*)

Men. For corn at their own rates; whereof, they say,
The city is well stor'd.

Mar. Hang 'em! They say?—
They'll sit by the fire, and presume to know

What's done i'the Capitol;
 Making parties strong,
 And feebling such as stand not in their liking,
 Below their cobbled shoes.
 They say, there's grain enough!
 Would the nobility lay aside their ruth,
 And let me use my sword, I'd make a quarry*
 With thousands of these quarter'd slaves, as high
 As I could pick † my lance. (*Citizens retire, R.H.*)

Men. But I beseech you, what says the other troop?

Mar. They are dissolved:

They said, they were an-hungry; sighed forth pro-
 verbs;—

That, *Hunger broke stone walls*—that, *Dogs must eat*,—

That, *Meat was made for mouths*,—that, *The gods sent not*

Corn for the rich men only.—With these shreds
 They vented their complainings; which being an-
 swered,

And a petition granted them, a strange one,—

To break the heart of generosity, ‡

And make bold power look pale,—they threw their
 caps

As they would hang them on the horns o'the moon,
 Shouting their emulation. ||

Men. What is granted them?

Mar. Five tribunes, to defend their vulgar wis-
 doms,

Of their own choice. One's Junius Brutus,
 Sicinius Velutus, and I know not———'Sdeath!|

The rabble should have first unroof'd the city,

Ere so prevail'd with me: it will in time

Win upon power, and throw forth greater themes

For insurrection's arguing.

Men. This is strange.

* A *quarry* among hunters signifies the reward given to hounds after they have hunted, or the venison which is taken by hunting.—

† Pitch.—‡ High birth.—|| Faction.

Enter FULVIUS, R.H.

Ful. Where's Caius Marcius?

Mar. Here.—What is the matter?

(Crosses to Fulvius.)

Ful. The news is, sir, the Volscians are in arms.

Mar. I am glad on't,—then we shall have means to vent

Our musty superfluity.

Enter COMINIUS, LICTORS, SICINIUS and BRUTUS, R.H.—(Fulvius passes behind to L.H.—Lictors cross, and range behind Fulvius;—Sicinius and Brutus go to the Citizens.)

Com. Marcius, 'tis true, that you have lately told us,

The Volscians are in arms.

Mar. They have a leader,
Tullus Aufidius, that will put you to't.
I sin in envying his nobility:
And, were I any thing but what I am,
I'd wish me only he.

Com. You have fought together?

Mar. Were half to half the world by the ears, and he
Upon my party, I'd revolt, to make
Only my wars with him:—he is a lion
That I am proud to hunt.

Men. Then, worthy Marcius,
Attend upon Cominius to these wars.

Com. It is your former promise.

Mar. Sir, it is;

And I am constant: *—thou
Shalt see me once more strike at Tullus' face.

Men. O, true bred!

Com. Your company to the Capitol: where, I know,
Our greatest friends attend us.

(Tribunes and Citizens advance, R.H.)

* Immovable in my resolution.

Mar. Lead you on.

[*Exeunt Fulvius, Lictors, and Cominius, L.H.*

Men. Hence ; to your homes !—begone.

Mar. Nay, let them follow ;

The Volscians have much corn ; take these rats
thither,

To gnaw their garners. Worshipful mutineers,
Your valour puts well forth ;—pray, follow. (*To Men.*)

[*Exeunt Men. and Mar. L.H. Citizens, R.H.*

Sic. Was ever man so proud,

As is this Marcius ?

Bru. He has no equal.

Sic. When we were chosen tribunes for the people,—

Bru. Mark'd you his lip, and eyes ?

Sic. Nay, but his taunts.

Bru. Being mov'd, he will not spare to gird the
gods.—

The present wars devour him ! He is grown
Too proud to be so valiant.

Sic. Such a nature,

Tickled with good success, disdains the shadow
Which he treads on at noon. But I do wonder,
His insolence can brook to be commanded
Under Cominius.

Bru. Fame, at which he aims,
In which already he is well grac'd, cannot
Better be held, nor more attain'd, than by
A place below the first ; for what miscarries
Shall be the General's fault, tho' he perform
To the utmost of a man ; and giddy censure
Will then cry out of Marcius, *O, if he*
Had borne the business !

Sic. Besides, if things go well,
Opinion, that so sticks on Marcius, shall
Of his demerits* rob Cominius.

Bru. Come ;

Half of Cominius' honours are to Marcius,

* Merits and *demerits* had anciently the same meaning.

Though Marcius earn'd them not ; and all his faults
To Marcius shall be honours, though, indeed,
In aught he merit not.

Sic. Let's hence, and hear
How the despatch is made ; and in what fashion,
More than his singularity, he goes
Upon this present action.

Bru. Let's along.

[*Exeunt*, L.H.]

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in CAIUS MARCIUS'
House in Rome.*

Enter VOLUMNIA and VIRGILIA, R.H.

Vol. I pray you, daughter, sing, or express yourself in a more comfortable sort : if my son were my husband, I would freely rejoice in that absence, wherein he won honour. When yet he was but tender-bodied, and my only son ; when youth with comeliness plucked all gaze his way ; when, for a day of kings' entreaties, a mother should not sell him an hour from her beholding ; I,—considering how honour would become such a person ; that it was no better than picture-like to hang by the wall, if renown made it not stir,—was pleas'd to let him seek danger, where he was like to find fame : to a cruel war I sent him ; from whence he return'd, his brows bound with oak.* I tell thee, daughter, I sprang not more in joy at first hearing he was a man-child, than now in first seeing he had proved himself a man. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Vir. But had he died in the business, madam ? How then ?

Vol. Then his good report should have been my son. Hear me profess sincerely :—had I a dozen sons,—each in my love alike, and none less dear than thine and my good Marcius,—I had rather had eleven die nobly for their country, than one voluptuously surfeit out of action.

* The crown given by the Romans to him that saved the life of a citizen, which was accounted more honourable than any other.

Enter SERVILIA, L.H.

Ser. Madam, the lady Valeria is come to visit you.

Vir. 'Beseech you, give me leave to retire myself.
(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Vol. Indeed, you shall not.

Methinks, I hither hear your husband's drum ;
I see him pluck Aufidius down by the hair ;
Methinks, I see him stamp thus,—and call thus ;—
Come on, you cowards, you were got in fear,
*Though you were born in Rome :—*His bloody brow
With his mail'd hand then wiping, forth he goes ;
Like to a harvest-man, that's task'd to mow
Or all, or lose his hire.

Vir. His bloody brow ! O, Jupiter, no blood.

Vol. Away, you fool ! it more becomes a man,
Than gilt his trophy : the breasts of Hecuba,
When she did suckle Hector, look'd not lovelier
Than Hector's forehead, when it spit forth blood
At Grecian swords' contending.—Tell Valeria,
We are fit to bid her welcome. [*Exit Servilia, L.H.*

Vir. Heav'ns bless my lord from fell Aufidius !

Vol. He'll beat Aufidius' head below his knee,
And tread upon his neck. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Enter SERVILIA and VALERIA, L.H.

Val. My ladies both, good day to you !

[*Exit Servilia, L.H.*

You are manifest housekeepers !—

How does your little son ?

Vir. I thank your ladyship ; well, good madam.

Vol. He had rather see the swords, and hear a drum,
than look upon his schoolmaster.

Val. O' my word, the father's son : I'll swear, 'tis
a very pretty boy. O' my troth, I look'd upon him o'
Wednesday half an hour together,—he has such a con-
firm'd countenance ! I saw him run after a gilded

butterfly; and when he caught it, he let it go again; and after it again; and over and over he comes, and up again; caught it again: or whether his fall enraged him, or how 'twas, he did so set his teeth, and tear it; O, I warrant, how he mammoth'd it!

Vol. One of his father's moods.

Val. Indeed, la, 'tis a noble child.

Vir. A crack, madam.

Val. Come, lay aside your business; I must have you play the idle housewife with me this afternoon.

Vir. No, good madam: I will not out of doors.

Val. Not out of doors.

Vol. She shall, she shall. (*Crosses to Centre.*)

Vir. Indeed, no, by your patience: I will not over the threshold, till my lord return from the wars.

Val. Fie, you confine yourself most unreasonably: you would be another Penelope: yet, they say, all the yarn she spun in Ulysses' absence, did but fill Ithaca full of moths. Come, come, you shall go with us.

Vir. No, good madam, pardon me; indeed, I will not forth.

Val. In truth, la, go with me; and I'll tell you excellent news of your husband.

Vir. O, good madam, there can be none yet.

Val. Verily, I do not jest with you.

Vir. Indeed, madam?

Val. In earnest, it's true; I heard a senator speak it. Thus it is:—the Volscians have an army forth, against whom Cominius the general is gone, with one part of our Roman power:—your lord, and Titus Lartius, are set down before their city Corioli; they nothing doubt prevailing, and to make it brief wars. This is true, on my honour; and so, I pray, go with us.

Vir. Give me excuse, good madam; I will obey you in every thing hereafter. [*Exit, R. H.*]

Vol. Let her alone, lady; as she is now, she will but disease our better mirth. [*Exeunt, L. H.*]

SCENE III.—*A Wood, near the Camp of Cominius.*

(*Shouts, R.H.—Trumpets sound a Retreat.*)

Enter COMINIUS, R.H. with Soldiers, Retreating.—(The Soldiers form themselves on R.H.—Some bearing the Banners, some with Swords and Shields, and some with Spears and Shields.)

Com. Breathe you, my friends ;—well fought ;
We are come off
Like Romans, neither foolish in our stands,
Nor cowardly in retire.—Believe me, sirs,
We shall be charged again. Whiles we have struck,
By interims, and conveying gusts, we have heard
The charges of our friends ;—the Roman Gods
Lead their successes as we wish our own !

Enter APPIUS, L.H.U.E.

Thy news ?

App. The citizens of Corioli have issued,
And given to Marcius battle :
I saw our party to the trenches driv'n,
And came in haste away.

Com. How long is't since ?

App. About an hour, my lord. Spies of the Volscians
Held me in chase, that I was forc'd to wheel
Three or four miles about ; else had I, sir,
Half an hour since brought my report.

(*Appius retires towards the Soldiers, R.H. U.E.*)

Com. (*Looking off, L.H.U.E.*) Who's yonder,
That does appear as he were flay'd ? O Gods !
He has the stamp of Marcius.

(*Marcius within, L.H. U.E.*)

Mar. Come I too late ?

Com. The shepherd knows not thunder from a
tabor,

More than I know the sound of Marcius' tongue
From every meaner man's.

Enter MARCIUS, L.H. U.E.—The twelve Lictors move into the centre, at the back part of the Stage.

Mar. Come I too late?

Com. Ay, if you come not in the blood of others,
But mantled in your own.

Mar. O! let me clip you,
In arms as sound, as when I woo'd; in heart
As merry, as when our nuptial day was done,
And tapers burnt to bedward.

Com. Flower of warriors,
How is't with Titus Lartius?

Mar. As with a man busied about decrees;
Condemning some to death, and some to exile;
Ransoming him, or pitying,* threat'ning the other;
Holding Corioli in the name of Rome,
Even like a fawning greyhound in the leash,
To let him slip at will.

Com. Where is that slave,
Which told me they had beat you to your trenches?
Where is he?

(Appius advances, and Fulvius prepares to seize him.)

Mar. Let him alone,
He did inform the truth:—but for our gentlemen,
The common file, (a plague! tribunes for them!)
The mouse ne'er shunn'd the cat, as they did budge
From rascals worse than they.

Com. But how prevail'd you?

Mar. Will the time serve to tell? I do not think:—
Where is the enemy! Are you lords o'the field?
If not, why cease you till you are so?

Com. Marcius,
We have at disadvantage fought, and did
Retire to win our purpose.

Mar. How lies their battle? Know you on which side
They have plac'd their men of trust?

* Remitting his ransom.

Com. As I guess, Marcius,
 Their bands i' the vayward are the Antiates,
 Of their best trust: o'er them Aufidius,
 Their very heart of hope.

Mar. I do beseech you,
 By all the battles wherein we have fought,
 By the blood we have shed together,
 That you directly
 Set me against Aufidius.

Com. Tho' I could wish
 You were conducted to a gentle bath,
 And balms applied to you, yet dare I never
 Deny your asking; take your choice of those
 That best can aid your action.

Mar. Those are they,
 That most are willing.—If any such be here,
 That love this painting,
 Wherein you see me smear'd;
 If any think, brave death outweighs bad life,
 And that his country's dearer than himself;
 Let him, alone, or so many, so minded,
 Wave thus, to express his disposition.

*(Flourish of Trumpets.—Soldiers shout three times,
 and wave their swords.)*

If these shows be not outward, which of you
 But is four Volcians?—Follow Marcius! come.—

[Exeunt, R.H.]

*(Alarums.—Shouts.—A loud Flourish.—Battle
 within.)*

SCENE IV.—*The Camp of Cominius.*

*Retreat sounded.—Enter MARCIUS, COMINIUS, FUL-
 VIUS, APPIUS, and Soldiers, R.H. U.E.*

Com. (R.H.) If I should tell thee over thy day's
 work,
 Thou'lt not believe thy deeds; but I'll report it,

Where senators shall mingle tears with smiles;
 Where the dull tribunes,
 That, with the fusty plebeians, hate thine honours,
 Shall say, against their hearts,—*We thank the Gods,
 Our Rome hath such a soldier.*

Mar. (L.H.) Pray now, no more : my mother,
 Who has a charter to extol her blood,
 When she does praise me, grieves me : I have done,
 As you have done,—that's what I can ; induc'd
 As you have been,—that's for my country.

Com. You shall not be
 The grave of your deserving ; Rome must know
 The value of her own ;
 Therefore, I beseech you,
 (In sign of what you are, not to reward
 What you have done,) before our army hear me.

Mar. I have some wounds upon me, and they smart
 To hear themselves remembered. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Com. Should they not,
 Well might they fester 'gainst ingratitude,
 And tent themselves with death. Of all the horses,
 (Whereof we've ta'en good, and good store,) of all
 The treasure, in this field achiev'd, and city,
 We render you the tenth ; to be ta'en forth,
 Before the common distribution, at
 Your only choice.

Mar I thank you, general :
 But cannot make my heart consent to take
 A bribe, to pay my sword : I do refuse it.

(*A Flourish of Trumpets, &c.*)

May these same instruments, which you profane,
 Never sound more ! when drums and trumpets shall
 I' the field prove flatterers, let the camps as cities
 Be made of false-fac'd soothing. (*Flourish again.*)
 No more, I say ; (*Crosses to R.H.*)

For that I have not wash'd my nose that bled,
 Or foil'd some debile wretch,—which without note
 Here's many else have done,—you shout me forth,
 In acclamations hyperbolical ;

As if I lov'd my little should be dieted
In praises sauc'd with lies.

Com. Too modest are you ;
More cruel to your good report, than grateful
To us that give you truly : therefore, be it known,
(*Crosses to R.H.*)

As to us, to all the world, that Caius Marcius
Wears this war's garland :—
For what he did before Corioli, call him,
With all the applause and clamour of the host,
Caius Marcius Coriolanus. Bear
The addition nobly ever !—

(*Flourish of Trumpets.—Shouts.—&c.*)

Cor. I will go wash ;
And when my face is fair, you shall perceive
Whether I blush or no. Howbeit, I thank you.

Com. So, to our tent :
Where, ere we do repose us, we will write
To Rome of our success,

Cor. The Gods begin to mock me ; I that now
Refus'd most princely gifts, am bound to beg
Of my lord general.

Com. Take't, 'tis yours.—What is't ?

Mar. I some time lay, here in Corioli,
At a poor man's house ; he us'd me kindly :
While we were fighting here, e'en now,—poor
wretch !—

He cried to me ; I saw him prisoner ;
But then Aufidius was within my view,
And wrath o'erwhelm'd my pity : I request you
To give my poor host freedom.

Com. O, well begg'd !
Were he the butcher of my son, he should
Be free, as is the wind.—His name ?

Mar. By Jupiter, forgot :—
I'm weary ; yea, my memory is tir'd.—
Have we no wine here ?

Com. Go we to our tent ;
The blood upon your visage dries ; 'tis time

It should be look'd to :—come.

[*A March.*—*Exeunt*, R.H.U.E.]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Rome.*

Enter MENENIUS, SICINIUS, and BRUTUS, R.H.

Men. The augurer tells me, we shall have news to night.

Bru. Good, or bad ?

Men. Not according to the prayer of the people, for they love not Marcius.

Sic. Nature teaches beasts to know their friends.

Men. Pray you, whom does the wolf love !

Sic. The lamb.

Men. Ay, to devour him ; as the hungry plebeians would the noble Marcius.—You two are old men ; tell me one thing that I shall ask you.

Both. Well, sir.

Men. In what enormity is Marcius poor, that you two have not in abundance ?

Bru. He's poor in no one fault, but stor'd with all.

Sic. Especially, in pride.

Bru. And topping all others in boasting.

Men. This is strange now.—Do you two know how you are censur'd here in the city ; I mean of us o'the right-hand file ? Do you ?

Bru. Why,—how are we censur'd ?

Men. Because you talk of pride now.—Will you not be angry ?

Both. Well, well, sir ; well.

Men. You blame Marcius for being proud ?

Bru. We do it not alone, sir.

Men. I know, you can do very little alone.—You talk of pride ! O, that you could turn your eyes towards

the napes of your necks,* and make but an interior survey of your good selves! O, that you could!

Bru. What then, sir?

Men. Why, then you should discover a brace of unmeriting, proud, violent, testy magistrates, (alias, fools,) as any in Rome.

Sic. Menenius, you are known well enough too.

Men. I am known to be a humorous patrician, and one that loves a cup of hot wine, with not a drop of allaying Tiber, in't: what I think, I utter; and spend my malice within breath.

Bru. Come, sir, come; we know you well enough.

Men. You know neither me, yourselves, nor any thing. You are ambitious for poor knaves' caps and legs: you wear out a good wholesome forenoon, in hearing a cause between an orange-wife and a fosset-seller, and then rejoin the controversy of three-pence to a second day of audience.—You are a pair of strange ones.

Bru. Come, come, you are well understood to be a perfecter giber for the table, than a necessary benchman in the Capitol.

Men. Our very priests must become mockers, if they shall encounter such ridiculous subjects as you are. When you speak best unto the purpose, it is not worth the wagging of your beards; and your beards deserve not so honourable a grave, as to stuff a botcher's cushion; or to be entomb'd in an ass's pack saddle. Yet, you must be saying, Marcius is proud; who, in a cheap estimation, is worth all your predecessors, since Deucalion: though, peradventure, some of the best of them were hereditary hangmen. I will be bold to take my leave of you. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

(*Brutus and Sicinius stand aside.*)

Enter VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, and VALERIA, R.H.

How now, my as fair as noble ladies, (and the moon,

* With allusion to the fable, which says, that every man has a bag hanging before him, in which he puts his neighbour's faults, and another behind him in which he stows his own,

were she earthly, no nobler,) whither do you follow your eyes so fast?

Vol. Honourable Menenius, my boy Marcius approaches; for the love of Juno, let's go.—

(Crosses to L.H.)

Men. Ha! Marcius coming home!

Vol. Ay, worthy Menenius; and with most prosperous approbation.

Men. Take my cap, Jupiter, and I thank thee:—Hoo! Marcius coming home!

Vol. Look, here's a letter from him; the state hath another, his wife another; and, I think, there's one at home for you.

Men. I will make my very house reel to night.—A letter for me?

Vir. Yes, certain, there's a letter for you; I saw it.

Men. A letter for me? It gives me an estate of seven year's health; in which time, I will make a lip at the physician.—Is he not wounded? He was wont to come home wounded.

Vir. O, no, no, no.

Vol. O, he is wounded, I thank the Gods for't.

Men. So do I too, if it be not too much:—brings he a victory in his pocket, the wounds become him.

Vol. On's brows, Menenius: he comes the third time home with the oaken garland.

Men. Has he disciplin'd Aufidius soundly?

Vol. Titus Lartius writes,—they fought together, but Aufidius got off.

Men. And 'twas time for him too, I'll warrant him that: an he had staid by him, I would not have been so fidiu's'd for all the chests in Corioli, and the gold that's in them. Is the senate possess'd of this?

Vol. Yes, yes, yes: the senate has letters from the general, wherein he gives my son the whole name of the war: he hath in this action outdone his former deeds doubly.

Val. In troth, there's wondrous things spoke of him.

Men. Wondrous! ay, I warrant you, and not without his true purchasing.

Vir. The Gods grant them true!

Val. True?

(*Sicinius and Brutus come forward, R.H.*)

Men. True? I'll be sworn they are true.—Where is he wounded?—Heaven save your good worships! (*To the Tribunes.*) Marcius is coming home: he has more cause to be proud.—Where is he wounded? (*To Val.*)

Val. I'the shoulder and i'the left arm. He receiv'd, in the repulse of Tarquin, seven hurts i'the body.

Men. One in the neck, and two in the thigh,—there's nine that I know.

Vol. He had, before this last expedition, twenty-five wounds upon him.

Men. Now it's twenty-seven: every gash was an enemy's grave.

Vol. He with his single arm subdu'd Corioli.
His sword, death's stamp,
Where it did mark, it took: from face to foot
He was a thing of blood, whose every motion
Was tim'd with dying cries;—
Where'er he went, before him fortune flew,
While victory upon his dreaded brow
Sat thron'd, and joyful clapp'd her silver wings;—
Three times mine eagle singled out Aufidius,
And thrice the Volscians sunk beneath his thunder,
Bending the knee, as t'were in adoration.
Hark! hark! (*Flourish of Trumpets, L.H.*)
These are the ushers of Marcius;—before him
He carries noise, and behind him he leaves tears.

[*Exeunt, L.H.*]

SCENE II.—*Rome.—A Triumphal Arch.*

(*Citizens run across, shouting from R.H. U.E.*)

An Ovation.—Procession enters, R.H. U.E. through the Arch.—Exeunt, R.H.

ORDER OF PROCESSION.

Trophy.—S. P. Q. R.

Two Banners.—Corioli.—Two Banners.—Civic Crowns.

CORIOLANUS.

Two Banners.—Silver Eagles.

Six Fasces, two and two.

Chief Eagle.

Fulvius and Appius.

Two Swords and Shields.—Two Trophies,—Hands.

Two Spears and Shields.

Two Trophies,—Wolves.—Two Swords and Shields.
Fame.

Two Spears and Shields.

Two Golden Eagles.

Two Swords and Shields.—Two Battlements.

Two Spears and Shields.

Two Eagles and Patera's.—Two Swords and Shields.
(As they are going out, three shouts, L.H. U.E.)

SECOND DIVISION.

Four Boys, two and two, in Surplusses with Censers.

Two Priests.—Fires and Staves.

Two Priests—Knives.

Six Girls, bearing the Lamb.

Two Priests—Axes.—Two Priests—Fires.

Six Ladies, two and two.—Six Senators two and two.
(As they go off, three shouts behind, R.H. U.E.)

THIRD DIVISION.

S. P. Q. R.

Two Banners—Antium and Volsci.

Ten Musicians, two and two.—Six Fasces, two and two.

Two Trophies—Goat and Boar.

Two Trophies—Raven and Pegasus.

Sextus.

A Bier with Trophies.

Lucius.

Two Trophies—Lion and Ram.

Four Captive Generals, in Chains.

Two Trophies of Arms.

Navius.

Trophies on a Bier.

Aruns.

Two Trophies—Sphinx and Dragon.

Six Spears and Shields.
(As they go off, shouts, R.H. U.E.)

FOURTH DIVISION.

Choristers.
"See the Conquering Hero comes."
(As they go off, three shouts, R.H. U.E.)

FIFTH DIVISION

Sextus.—Bier with Trophies.—Trophies of Arms.
Trophies on Biers.—Range in front of Musicians.
Fame, exactly in the Centre.
Two Standards—S. P. Q. R. advance R.H. and L.H.
Two Standards—Corioli.
Two Standards—Antium and Volsci.
Two Silver Eagles.
Fulvius and Appius.
Two Standards—Wolves.—Two Standards—Battlements.
Two Standards—Eagles and Patera's.
Sextus and Lucius.
Two Standards—Hands
Two Standards—Civic Crowns.
Navius and Aruns.
Six Senators.
Brutus and Sicinius.
Six Ladies.
Roman Matrons.
Valeria and Servilia.—Virgilia.
Volumnia.
Two Golden Eagles.
Six Fasces.
Menenius and Cominius.
Coriolanus.
Chief Eagle.—Six Fasces —Spears and Shields.
Swords and Shields.

Cor. No more of this, it does offend my heart;
 Pray now, no more.

Com. Look, sir, your mother,—

Cor. O! (*Kneels.*)

You have, I know, petition'd all the Gods
For my prosperity.

Vol. Nay, my good soldier, up ; (Cor. rises.)
My gentle Marcius, worthy Caius, and
By deed-achieving honour newly nam'd,—
What is it ? Coriolanus must I call thee ?
But O, thy wife—

Cor. My gracious silence,* hail !
Would'st thou have laugh'd, had I come coffin'd home,
That weep'st to see me triumph ? Ah, my dear,
Such eyes the widows in Corioli wear,
And mothers that lack sons.

Vol. I know not where to turn. O welcome home ;
And welcome, general ;—and you are welcome all.

Men. A hundred thousand welcomes : I could
weep,
And I could laugh ; I'm light and heavy.—Welcome !
A curse begin at the very root of his heart,
That is not glad to see thee ! You are three,
That Rome should dote on ; yet, by the faith of men,
We've some old crab-trees here at home, that will not
Be grafted to your relish. Yet, welcome, warriors !
We call a nettle, but a nettle ; and
The faults of fools, but folly.

Com. Ever right.†
Give way there, and go on.

Cor. Your hand, and yours. (*To his wife and mother.*)
Ere in our own house I do shade my head,
The good patricians must be visited ;
From whom I have receiv'd not only greetings,
But with them change of honours.

Vol. I have liv'd,
To see inherited my very wishes,
And buildings of my fancy ; only there
Is one thing wanting, which I doubt not but
Our Rome will cast upon thee.

Cor. Know, good mother,

* By *my gracious silence*, I believe, the poet meant, thou whose silent tears are more eloquent and grateful to me than the clamorous applause of the rest.—† Ever the same affectionate friend.

I had rather be their servant in my way ;
 Than sway with them in theirs.
 On, to the Capitol.

A Grand March.—Exeunt Volumnia, Coriolanus, Virgilia, Cominius, Menenius, Valeria, Servilia, four Matrons, Brutus, and Sicinius, L.H. —Scene closes on the rest.—Shouts.—Drums, &c.

SCENE III.—*Rome.—A Street.*

Enter BRUTUS and SICINIUS, R.H.

Bru. The dumb men throng to see him, and the blind
 To hear him speak : the matrons flung their gloves,
 Ladies and maids their scarfs and handkerchiefs,
 Upon him as he pass'd : the nobles bended
 As to Jove's statue : and the commons made
 A shower, and thunder, with their caps, and shouts.
 I never saw the like ;—
 Such a pother,
 As if that whatsoever God, who leads him,
 Were slightly crept into his human powers,
 And gave him graceful posture.

Sic. On the sudden,
 I warrant him consul.

Bru. Then our office may,
 During his power, go sleep.

Sic. He cannot temperately transport his honours
 From where he should begin, and end ; but will
 Lose those that he hath won.

Bru. In that there's comfort.
 I heard him swear,
 Were he to stand for consul, never would he
 Appear in the market-place, nor on him put
 The napless vesture* of humility ;

* It was a custom for the candidates, during the time of election, to wear a white Linen Robe, and to appear in public without a retinue.

Than have him hold that purpose, and to put it
In execution.

Bru. 'Tis most like he will.

Sic. It shall be to him then, as our good will;
A sure destruction.

Enter FULVIUS, hastily, L.H.

Bru. What's the matter?

Ful. You're sent for to the Capitol. 'Tis thought,
That Marcius shall be consul.

Bru. Let's to the Capitol:
And carry with us ears and eyes for the time,
But hearts for the event.

Sic. Have with you. [*Exeunt, L.H.*]

SCENE IV.—*Rome — The Capitol.*

(*Flourish of Trumpets.*)

*Enter CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS,
COMINIUS, SICINIUS, BRUTUS, Senators, and
Officers. L.H.—(They take their seats on each
side of the Stage.)*

Men. (L.H.) Having determin'd of the Volscians,
It remains,
Most reverend and grave elders, to desire
The present consul, and last general,
To report
A little of that worthy work perform'd
By Caius Marcius Coriolanus; whom
We meet here, both to thank, and to remember
With honours like himself.
Worthy Cominius, speak.

(*Coriolanus, R.H. rises, and offers to go away.*)
Sit, Coriolanus; never shame to hear
What you have nobly done.
Nor, showing (as the manner is) his wounds
To the people, beg their stinking breaths.
Sic. I wish no better.

Cor. Your honours' pardon ;
I had rather have my wounds to heal again,
Than hear say how I got them.

Men. (*To Cor.*) Pray now, sit down.

Cor. I had rather have one scratch my head
i'the sun,
When the alarum were struck, than idly sit
To hear my nothings monster'd.

[*Exit, R.H.D.*

Men. Masters o' the people,
Your multiplying spawn how can he flatter,
When you now see
He had rather venture all his limbs for honour,
Than one of his ears to hear it ?—Proceed, Cominius.

Com. (*Seated in the State Chair, in the centre of
the Stage.*) I shall lack voice ; the deeds of
Coriolanus

Should not be utter'd feebly.—It is held,
That valour is the chiefest virtue, and
Most dignifies the haver : if it be,
The man I speak of cannot in the world,
Be singly counterpois'd. At sixteen years,
When Tarquin made a head for Rome, he fought
Beyond the mark of others ;
And, in the brunt of seventeen battles since,
He lurch'd all swords o'the garland. For this last,
Before and in Corioli, let me say,
I cannot speak him home :

Alone he entered

The mortal gate o'the city ; aidless came off,
And with a sudden re-inforcement struck
Corioli, like a planet. Now all's his :
When bye and bye the din of war 'gan pierce
His ready sense : then straight his doubled spirit
Requicken'd what in flesh was fatigate,
And to the battle came he ; where he did
Run reeking o'er the lives of men, as if
'Twere a perpetual spoil : and, till we call'd
Both field and city ours, he never stood
To ease his breast with panting.

Men. Worthy man !

Com. All our spoils he kick'd at ;
And look'd upon things precious, as they were
The common muck o'the world : he covets less
Than misery itself would give ; rewards
His deeds with doing them ; and is content
To spend the time, to spend it.

Men. He's right noble ;
Let him be call'd for.

Enter FULVIUS, R.H.D.

Com. He doth appear.

Enter CORIOLANUS and FULVIUS, R.H.D.

Men. The Senate, Coriolanus, are well pleas'd
To make thee consul.

Cor. I do owe them still
My life, and services.

Men. It then remains,
That you do speak to the people.

Cor. I do beseech you,
Let me o'er-leap that custom ; for I cannot
Put on the gown, stand naked, and entreat them,
For my wounds' sake, to give their suffrage : please
you,

That I may pass this doing.

Sic. (L.H.) Sir, the people
Must have their voices ; neither will they bate
One jot of ceremony.

Men. Put them not to't :
Pray you, go fit you to the custom ; and
Take to you, as your predecessors have,
Your honour with the form.

Cor. It is a part
That I shall blush in acting, and might well
Be taken from the people.

Bru. (L.H. to Sic.) Mark you that ?

Cor. To brag unto them,—Thus I did, and thus,—

Show them the unaking scars which I should hide,
As if I had receiv'd them for the hire
Of their breath only:—

Men. Do not stand upon't.—

We recommend to you, tribunes of the people,
Our purpose;—to them, and to our noble consul,
Wish we all joy and honour.

Com. To Coriolanus come all joy and honour !

[*Flourish of Trumpets.—Exeunt, R.H.*]

SCENE V.—*Rome.—A Street.*

Enter CITIZENS, R.H.

2d. Cit. Once,* if he do require our voices, we ought not to deny him.

1st. Cit. We may, sir, if we will.

2d. Cit. We have power in ourselves to do it, but it is a power that we have no power to do ; for, if he show us his wounds, and tell us his deeds, we are to put our tongues into those wounds, and speak for them : so, if he tell us his noble deeds, we must also tell him our noble acceptance of them. Ingratitude is monstrous, and for the multitude to be ingrateful, were to make a monster of the multitude ; of the which we, being members, should bring ourselves to be monstrous members.

1st. Cit. Here he comes, and in the gown of humility ; mark his behaviour. We are not to stay all together, but to come by him where he stands, by ones, by twos, and by threes. He's to make his requests by particulars : wherein every one of us has a single honour, in giving him our own voices with our own tongues : therefore, follow me, and I'll direct you how you shall go by him.

All. Content, content. [*Exeunt Citizens, L.H.*]

Enter CORIOLANUS with MENENIUS, R.H.

Men. O, sir, you are not right : have you not known

* Once for all.—

The worthiest men have done't ?

Cor. What must I say ?—

I pray, sir,———Plague upon't ! I cannot bring
My tongue to such a pace.—Look, sir,—my wounds,—
I got them in my country's service, when
Some certain of your brethren roar'd, and ran
From noise of our own drums.

Men. O me, the gods !

You must not speak of that ; you must desire them
To think upon you.

Cor. Think upon me ? Hang 'em !

I would they would forget me.

Men. You'll mar all :

I'll leave you. Pray you, speak to 'em, I pray you,
In wholesome manner.

[*Exit R.H.*]

Enter First and Second CITIZENS, L.H.

Cor. So, here comes a brace.—(*Aside.*)

You know the cause, sirs, of my standing here.

1st. Cit. We do, sir ; tell us what has brought
you to't.

Cor. Mine own desert.

2d. Cit. Your own desert ?

Cor. Ay, not

Mine own desire.

1st. Cit. How ! not your own desire ?

Cor. No, sir :

'Twas never my desire yet to trouble
The poor with begging.

1st. Cit. You must think, if we give you any thing,
We hope to gain by you.

Cor. Well then, I pray, your price o'the consulship ?

1st. Cit. The price is, sir, to ask it kindly.

Cor. Kindly !

Sir, I pray, let me ha't : I've wounds to show you,
Which shall be yours in private.—Your good voice, sir ;
What say you ?

2d. Cit. You shall have it, worthy sir.

Cor. A match, sir :—

There is in all two worthy voices begged :—(*Aside.*)
(*Crosses to L.H.*)

I have your alms ; adieu.

1st Cit. But this is something odd.

2d. Cit. An'twere to give again,—but 'tis no matter.
[*Exeunt Citizens, L.H.*]

Cor. Most sweet voices !—

Better it is to die, better to starve,
Than crave the hire which first we do deserve.
Here come more voices.

Enter the other CITIZENS, L.H.

Your voices :—for your voices I have fought ;
Watch'd for your voices ; for your voices, bear
Of wounds two dozen odd ; battles thrice six
I've seen and heard of :—for your voices, have
Done many things, some less, some more :—your
voices :—

Indeed, I would be consul.

3d. Cit. He has done nobly, and cannot go without
any honest man's voice.

4th. Cit. Therefore let him be consul : the gods
give him joy, and make him a good friend to the
people !

All. Amen, amen.—

Heaven save thee, noble consul !

[*Exeunt all the Citizens, R.H.*]

Cor. Worthy voices !

Enter MENENIUS, BRUTUS, and SICINIUS, R.H.

Men. You've stood your limitation ; and the tribunes
Endue you with the people's voice : remains,
That, in the official marks invested, you
Anon do meet the senate.

Cor. Is this done ?

Sic. The custom of request you have discharg'd :
The people do admit you ; and are summon'd
To meet anon, upon your approbation.

Cor. Where ? At the senate house ?

Sic. There, Coriolanus.

Cor. May I then change these garments?

Sic. You may, sir.

Cor. That I'll straight do: and, knowing myself again,

Repair to the senate-house. [*Exit*, R.H.]

Men. I'll keep you company.—Will you along?

Bru. We stay here for the people.

Sic. Fare you well. [*Exit Menenius*, R.H.]

He has it now; and by his looks, methinks,
'Tis warm at his heart.

Bru. With a proud heart he wore
His humble weeds:—will you dismiss the people?

Re-enter all the CITIZENS, R.H.

Sic. How now, my masters? Have you chose this man?

2d. Cit. He has our voices, sir.

Bru. We pray the gods, he may deserve your loves.

1st. Cit. Amen, sir: to my poor unworthy notice,
He mock'd us, when he begged our voices.

3d. Cit. Certainly,
He flouted us downright.

2d. Cit. No, 'tis his kind of speech, he did not mock us.

1st. Cit. Not one among us, save yourself, but says,
He us'd us scornfully: he should have show'd us
His marks of merit, wounds receiv'd for his country.

Sic. Why, so he did, I am sure.

1st. Cit. No; no man saw 'em.
He said, he had wounds, which he could show in
private:

I would be consul, says he: *aged custom*,

But by your voices, will not so permit me;

Your voices, therefore: When we granted that,

Here was,—*I thank you for your voices*,—*thank*
you,—

Your most sweet voices:—*now you have left your*
voices,

I have nothing further with you.—Was not this mockery?

Sic. Why, either, you were ignorant to see't;
Or, seeing it, of such childish friendliness
To yield your voices?

Bru. Did you perceive,
He did solicit you in free contempt,
When he did need your loves; and do you think,
That his contempt shall not be bruising to you,
When he hath power to crush?

Sic. Have you,
Ere now, deny'd the asker? And now again,
On him, that did not ask, but mock, bestow
Your sued-for tongues?

1st. Cit. He's not confirm'd, we may deny him yet.

3d. Cit. And will deny him:
I'll have five hundred voices of that sound.

1st. Cit. I twice five hundred, and their friends to
piece 'em.

Bru. Get you hence, instantly; and tell those
friends,—

They have chose a consul, that will from them take
Their liberties; make them of no more voice
Than dogs, that are as often beat for barking,
As therefore kept to do so.

Sic. Enforce his pride,
And his old hate unto you:
Say, you chose him
More after our commandment, than as guided
By your own true affections:
Lay the fault on us.

Bru. Ay, spare us not.
Say, you ne'er had done't,
(Harp on that still,) but by our putting on:
And presently, when you have drawn your number,
Repair to the Capitol.

All. We will; we will.

[*Exeunt Citizens, L.H. Sic. and Bru. R.H.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Rome.—A Street.*

Enter COMINIUS, CORIOLANUS, and MENENIUS. R.H.

Cor. Tullus Aufidius then had made new head?
So then the Volscians stand but as at first;
Ready, when time shall prompt them, to make road
Upon's again.

Com. They are worn, lord consul, so,
That we shall hardly in our ages see
Their banners wave again.

Cor. Behold! these are the tribunes of the people,
The tongues o'the common mouth. I do despise
them;

For they do prank* them in authority,
Against all noble sufferance. *(Crosses to L.H.)*

Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS, L.H.

Sic. Pass no further. *(To Coriolanus.)*

Cor. Ha!—what is that?—

Bru. It will be dangerous to
Go on: no further.

Cor. What makes this change?

Men. The matter?

Com. Hath he not pass'd the nobles and the
commons?

Bru. Cominius, no.

Cor. Have I had children's voices?

Men. Tribunes, give way; he shall to the market-
place.

Bru. The people are incens'd against him.

Cor. Are these your herd?—

Must these have voices, that can yield them now,
And straight disclaim their tongues?—What are your
offices?

* Plume, deck, dignify themselves.

You being their mouths, why rule you not their teeth?
Have you not set them on?

Men. Be calm, be calm. (*To Cor.*)

Cor. It is a purpos'd thing, and grows by plot,
To curb the will of the nobility.

Bru. Call't not a plot.

The people cry you mock'd them; and, of late,
When corn was given them gratis, you repin'd,
Scandal'd the suppliants of the people; call'd them
Time-pleasers, flatterers, foes to nobleness.

Cor. Why, this was known before.

Bru. Not to them all.

Cor. Have you informed them since?

Bru. How! I inform them!

Cor. You are like to do such business.

Bru. Not unlike,

Each way, to better yours.

Cor. Why then should I be consul? By yon clouds,
Let me deserve so ill as you, and make me
Your fellow tribune.

Men. Well, no more.—(*To Cor.*)

Cor. How!—no more?

As for my country I have shed my blood,
Not fearing outward force, so shall my lungs
Coin words till their decay, against those meazels*,
Which we disdain should tetter us, yet sought
The very way to catch them.

Bru. You speak o'the people,
As if you were a God to punish, not
A man of their infirmity,

Sic. 'Twere well
We let the people know't.

Men. What, what? His choler?

Cor. Choler!

Were I as patient as the midnight sleep,
By Jove, 'twould be my mind.

Sic. It is a mind
That shall remain a poison where it is,
Not poison any further.

* *Measels*—*Mesell* is used in *Pierce Plowman's* vision, for a leper.

Cor. Shall remain ?
 Hear you this Triton of the minnows ? Mark you
 His absolute *shall* ?—
Shall !—

Com. Well,—on to the market-place.

Cor. Whoever gave that counsel, to give forth
 The corn o'the storehouse gratis, as 'twas us'd
 Sometime in Greece,—

Men. Well, well, no more of that.

Cor. I say, they nourish'd disobedience, fed
 The ruin of the state.

Bru. Why, shall the people give
 One, that speaks thus, their voice ?

Sic. He has spoken like a traitor, and shall answer
 As traitors do.

Cor. Thou wretch ! despite o'erwhelm thee !—
 What should the people do with these bald tribunes ?
 On whom depending, their obedience fails
 To the greater bench : in a rebellion,
 When what's not meet, but what must be, was law,
 Then were they chosen ; in a better hour,
 Let what is meet, be said, it must be meet,
 And throw their power i'the dust.

Bru. Manifest treason. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Sic. This a consul ? No.

Bru. The Ædiles, ho !—Let him be apprehended.

Sic. Go, call the people ; (*Brutus beckons the
 Citizens, who enter immediately, R.H.*)

In whose name, myself
 Attach thee, as a traitorous innovator,
 A foe to the public weal :—
 Obey, I charge thee,
 And follow to thine answer.

(*Laying hold on Coriolanus.*)

Cor. Hence, or I shall shake thy bones
 Out of thy garments.

Bru. Or let us stand to our authority,
 Or let us lose it :—we do here pronounce,
 Upon the part o'the people, in whose power
 We were elected theirs, Marcius is worthy
 Of present death.

Sic. Therefore, lay hold of him ;
Bear him to the rock Tarpeian, and from thence
Into destruction cast him.

Cor. No ; I'll die here. (*Drawing his sword.*)

Men. Down with that sword :—tribunes, withdraw
awhile.—

I pr'ythee, noble friend, home to thy house ;
Leave us to cure this cause ;—for 'tis a sore
You cannot tent yourself : begone, 'beseech you.

Com. Come, sir, along with us.

Cor. On fair ground,—
I could beat forty of them.

[*Exeunt Coriolanus, and Cominius, L.H.*]

Men. You worthy tribunes,—

Sic. He shall be thrown down the Tarpeian rock
With rigorous hands ; he hath resisted law,
And therefore law shall scorn him further trial.

1st. Cit. He shall well know,
The noble tribunes are the people's mouths,
And we their hands.

All. He shall, be sure on't.

Men. Sir,—

Sic. Peace.

Men. Do not cry havock, where you should but
hunt
With modest warrant.

Sic. Sir, how comes't,—that you
Have help to make this rescue ?

Men. Hear me speak ;—
As I do know the consul's worthiness,
So can I name his faults :—

Sic. Consul !—What consul ?

Men. The consul Coriolanus.

Bru. He a consul !—

All. No, no, no, no, no.

Men. If, by the tribunes' leave, and yours, good
people,
I may be heard, I'd crave a word or two ;
The which shall turn you to no further harm,
Than so much loss of time.

Bru. We'll hear no more ;—
Pursue him to his house, and pluck him thence ;
Lest his infection, being of catching nature,
Spread further.

(Citizens rush tumultuously towards L.H.)

Men. One word more, one word :—
Proceed by process ;
Lest parties (as he is belov'd,) break out,
And sack great Rome with Romans.

Bru. If 'twere so,—

Sic. What do ye talk ?
Have we not had a taste of his obedience ?

Men. Consider this ;—he hath been bred i'the
wars
Since he could draw a sword, and is ill school'd
In boulted language ; meal and bran together
He throws without distinction. Give me leave,
I'll go to him, and undertake to bring him
Where he shall answer, by a lawful form,
(In peace) to his utmost peril.

Sic. Noble Menenius,
Be you then as the people's officer.—

(Crosses with Brutus, to R.H.)

Meet on the market-place :—we'll attend you there :
Where, if you bring not Marcius, we'll proceed
In our first way.

Men. I'll go and bring him to you.

[Exeunt ; Sicinius, Brutus, and Citizens, R.H.—

Menenius, L.H.]

SCENE II.—*Rome.—An Apartment in Coriolanus' House.*

Enter CORIOLANUS and VOLUMNIA, L.H.

Cor. Let them pull all about mine ears ; present
me
Death on the wheel, or at wild horses' heels ;
Or pile ten hills on the Tarpeian rock,
That the precipitation might down stretch

Below the beam of sight, yet will I still
Be thus to them.

Vol. But hear me, Marcius.—

Cor. I muse, my mother
Does not approve me further.
Why did you wish me milder? Would you have me
False to my nature? Rather say, I play,
Truly the man I am.

Vol. O, sir, sir, sir,
I would have had you put your power well on,
Before you had worn it out.

Cor. Why, let it go. *(Crosses to L.H.)*

Vol. You might have been enough the man you are,
With striving less to be so: lesser had been
The thwartings of your dispositions, if
You had not show'd them how you were dispos'd,
Ere they lack'd power to cross you.

Cor. Let them hang. *(Crosses to R.H.)*

Vol. Ay, and burn too.

Enter MENENIUS, L.H.

Men. Come, come, you've been too rough, something
too rough;
You must return, and mend it.

Vol. Pray, be counsell'd;
I have a heart as little apt as yours,
But yet a brain, that leads my use of anger,
To better 'vantage.

Men. Well said, noble woman:
Before he should thus stoop to the herd, but that
The violent fit o'the time craves it as physic
For the whole state, I would put mine armour on,
Which I can scarcely bear.

Cor. What must I do?

Men. Return to the tribunes.

Cor. Well,
What then? What then?

Men. Repent what you have spoke.

Cor. For them?—I cannot do it to the gods;

Must I then do't to them ?

Vol. You are too absolute ;
 Tho' therein you can never be too noble,
 But when extremities speak. I have heard you say,
 Honour and policy, like unsever'd friends,
 I'the war do grow together : grant that, and tell me,
 In peace, what each of them by th'other lose,
 That they combine not there.

Cor. Tush !—tush !— (*Crosses to Centre.*)

Men. A good demand.

Cor. Why force* you this ?

Vol. Because that now it lies on you to speak
 To the people :
 I would dissemble with my nature, where
 My fortunes, and my friends, at stake, requir'd
 I should do so in honour.

I pr'ythee now, my son,
 Go to them ;
 Say to them,
 Thou art their soldier, and, being bred in broils,
 Hast not the soft way, which, thou dost confess,
 Were fit for thee to use, as they to claim,
 In asking their good loves ; but thou wilt frame
 Thyself, forsooth, hereafter theirs, so far
 As thou hast power, and person.

Men. This but done,
 Even as she speaks, why, all their hearts were yours ;
 For they have pardons, being ask'd, as free
 As words to little purpose.

Com. (*Behind, L.H.*) Where's Coriolanus ?

Enter COMINIUS, L.H.

Men. Here is Cominius.

Com. I have been i'the market-place : and, sir, 'tis
 fit
 You make strong party, or defend yourself
 By calmness, or by absence ; all's in anger.

Men. Only fair speech.

Com. I think, 'twill serve, if he

Can thereto frame his spirit.

Vol. He must, and will:—

Pr'ythee, now, say you will, and go about it.

Cor. Must I go show them my unbarb'd* sconce?

Must I

With my base tongue, give to my noble heart

A lie, that it must bear? Well, I will do't:

Yet were there but this single plot to lose,

This mould of Marcius, they to dust should grind it,

And throw it against the wind.—To th' market-
place:—(*Crosses to Menenius.*)

You have put me now to such a part, which never
I shall discharge to the life.

Com. Come, come, we'll prompt you.

Vol. I pr'ythee now, sweet son; as thou hast said,
My praises made thee first a soldier, so,
To have my praise for this, perform a part
Thou hast not done before.

Cor. Well, I must do't:

Away, my disposition, and possess me

Some harlot's spirit! My throat of war be turn'd,

Which quired† with my drum, into a pipe

Small as an eunuch, or the virgin voice

That babies lulls asleep!

A beggar's tongue

Make motion through my lips; and my arm'd knees,

Which bow'd but in my stirrup, bend like his

That hath received an alms!—I will not do't:

Lest I surcease to honour mine own truth,

And, by my body's action, teach my mind

A most inherent baseness.

(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Vol. At thy choice then:

To beg of thee, it is my more dishonour,

Than thou of them. Come all to ruin; let

Thy mother rather feel thy pride, than fear

Thy dangerous stoutness; for I mock at death

With as big heart as thou. Do as thou list.

Thy valiantness was mine, thou suck'dst it from me;

But owe† thy pride thyself.

(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Cor. Pray, be content;

* Bare, uncovered.—† Own.—‡ Which played in concert with my drum.

Mother, I am going to the market-place ;
 Chide me no more. I'll mountebank their loves,
 Cog their hearts from them, and come home below'd
 Of all the trades in Rome. Look, I am going :
 Commend me to my wife. I'll return consul ;
 Or never trust to what my tongue can do
 I the way of flattery, further.

Vol. Do your will.

[*Exit, R.II.*]

Com. Arm yourself
 To answer mildly ; for they are prepar'd
 With accusations, as I hear, more strong
 Than are upon you yet.

Cor. The word is, mildly :—pray you, let us go :—
 (*Crosses to centre.*)

Let them accuse me by invention, I
 Will answer in mine honour.

Men. Ay,—but mildly.

Cor. Well, mildly be it then ;—mildly !

[*Exeunt, Cor. Com. and Men., L.II.*]

SCENE III.—*Rome.—The Forum.*

Enter SICINIUS, BRUTUS, and Citizens, R.II.U.E.

Bru. Put him to choler straight : he hath been
 us'd

Ever to conquer, and to have his worth*
 Of contradiction : being once chaf'd, he cannot
 Be rein'd again to temp'rance ; then he speaks
 What's in his heart ; and that is there, which looks
 With us to break his neck.

Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, and COMINIUS, L.II.

Sic. Well, here he comes.

Men. Calmly, I do beseech you. (*To Cor.*)

Cor. (*Crosses to centre.*) The honour'd gods
 Keep Rome in safety, and the chairs of justice
 Supply'd with worthy men ! plant love among us !
 Throng our large temples with the shows of peace,

* Pennyworth.

And not our streets with war!

Men. Amen, amen! A noble wish.

Sic. Draw near, ye people.

Cor. Shall I be charg'd no further than this present?

Must all determine here?

Sic. I do demand,

If you submit you to the people's voices,

Allow their officers, and are content

To suffer lawful censure for such faults

As shall be prov'd upon you.

Cor. I am content.

Men. Lo, citizens, he says, he is content:

The warlike service he has done, consider;

Think on the wounds his body bears, which show
Like graves i'the holy church-yard.

Cor. Scratches with briars.—

What is the matter,

That being pass'd for consul with full voice,

I'm so dishonour'd, that the very hour

You take it off again?

Sic. Answer to us.

Cor. Say then: 'tis true, I ought so.

Sic. We charge you, that you have contrived to
take

From Rome all season'd* office, and to wind

Yourself into a power tyrannical;

For which, you are a traitor to the people.

Cor. How! Traitor?

Men. Nay; temperately:—your promise. (*To Cor.*)

Cor. The fires i'the lowest hell fold in the people!

Call me their traitor!—Thou injurious tribune!

Within thine eyes sat twenty thousand deaths,

In thy hands clutch'd as many millions, in

Thy lying tongue both numbers, I would say,

Thou liest, unto thee, with a voice as free

As I do pray the gods.

Sic. Mark you this, people?

All. To the rock with him; to the rock with him!

Sic. Peace.—

* Established and settled by time.

We need not put new matter to his charge :
 What you have seen him do, and heard him speak,
 Deserves the extremest death.

Bru. But since he hath
 Serv'd well for Rome,—

Cor. What do you prate of service ?

Bru. I talk of that, that know it.

Cor. You ?—

Men. Is this
 The promise that you made your mother ?

Com. Know,
 I pray you,—

Cor. I'll know no further :

Let them pronounce the steep Tarpeian death,
 Vagabond exile, flaying ;—pent to linger
 But with a grain a day, I would not buy
 Their mercy at the price of one fair word ;
 Nor check my courage for what they can give,
 To have't with saying, Good morrow.

Sic. For that he has
 (As much as in him lies) from time to time
 Envy'd against the people, seeking means
 To pluck away their power ; as now at last
 Given hostile strokes, and that not in the presence
 Of dreaded justice, but on the ministers
 That do distribute it ; in the name o'the people,
 And in the power of us the tribunes,
 Even from this instant, banish him our city.

Com. Hear me, my masters, and my common
 friends ;—

Bru. There's no more to be said, but he is banish'd,
 As enemy to the people, and his country :
 It shall be so.

All. It shall be so, it shall be so.

Cor. (*Rushes forward to the centre.*) Ye common
 cry* of curs ! whose breath I hate
 As reek o'the rotten fens,—whose loves I prize
 As the dead carcases of unburied men
 That do corrupt my air,—I banish you ;
 And here remain with your uncertainty !

* Cry here signifies a troop, or pack.

Let every feeble rumour shake your hearts !
 Your enemies, with nodding of their plumes,
 Fan you into despair ! Have the power still
 To banish your defenders ; till, at length,
 Your ignorance
 Deliver you, as most
 Abated* captives, to some nation
 That won you without blows !—(*Crosses to R.H. fol-
 lowed by Men. and Com.*)—Despising now
 For you, the city, thus I turn my back :
 There is a world elsewhere.
 [*The people Shout, and all follow Coriolanus, R.H.*]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE V.—*Antium.—A Room in Aufidius's House.*

Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS, and VOLUSIUS, R.H.

Volu. Whence is it, Tullus, that our arms are
 stopp'd
 Upon the borders of the Roman state ?
 Why sleeps that spirit, whose heroic ardour
 Urg'd you to break the truce, and pour'd our host,
 From all the united cantons of the Volscians,
 On their unguarded frontier ? Such designs
 Brook not an hour's delay ; their whole success
 Depends on instant vigorous execution.

Auf. O, my Volusius ! thou, who art a soldier,
 A tried and brave one too, say, in thy heart
 Dost thou not scorn me ? Thou, who saw'st me bend
 Beneath the half-spent thunder of a foe,
 Warm from the conquest of Corioli.

Volu. True valour, Tullus,

* Dejected, subdued, depressed in spirit.

Lies in the mind the never-yielding purpose :
Nor heeds the blind award of giddy fortune.

Auf. My soul, my friend, my soul is all on fire ;
Thirst of revenge consumes me ; the revenge
Of generous emulation, not of hatred.
This happy Roman, this proud Marcius, haunts me.
Each troubled night, when slaves and captives sleep
Forgetful of their chains, I in my dreams
Anew am vanquish'd ; and, beneath his sword
With horror sinking, feel a ten-fold death,
The death of honour. But I will redeem,—
Yes, Marcius, I will yet redeem my fame.
To face thee once again is the great purpose
For which alone I live.—Till then, how slow,
How tedious, lags the time ! while shame corrodes
me

With many a bitter thought ; and injur'd honour,
Sick and desponding, preys upon itself.

Enter SEXTUS, R.H.

Ha ! why this haste ? You look alarm'd.

Sex. My lord,
One of exalted port, his visage hid,
Has plac'd himself beneath the statue of
The mighty Mars, and there majestic stands
In solemn silence.

Auf. Did you not ask him who, and what he was ?

Sex. My lord, I could not speak ; I felt appall'd,
As if the presence of some god had struck me.

Auf. Come, dastard, let me find this man of terrors.
[*Exeunt, R.H.*

SCENE II.—*A Hall, with the Statue of Mars.*

CORIOLANUS, discovered as described above.

Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS, R.H.

Auf. Illustrious stranger,—for thy high demeanour
Bespeaks thee such,—who art thou ? What is thy name ?

Cor. A name unmusical to the Volscians ears,
And harsh in sound to thine. (*Uncovering his face.*)
Know'st thou me yet?

Auf. Thy face
Bears a command in't; though thy tackle's torn,
'Thou show'st a noble vessel.—What's thy name?

Cor. (*Throwing off his cloak.*) My name is Caius
Marcius, who hath done
To thee particularly, and to all the Volscians,
Great hurt and mischief; thereto witness may
My surname, Coriolanus.
The cruelty and envy of the people,
Permitted by our dastard nobles, have
Whoop'd me out of Rome. Now, this extremity
Hath brought me to thy hearth. Then if thou hast
A heart of wreak in thee, that will revenge
Thine own particular wrongs, and stop those maims
Of shame seen through thy country, speed thee
straight,
And make my misery serve thy turn; so use it,
That my revengeful services may prove
As benefits to thee; for I will fight
Against my canker'd country with the spleen
Of all the under fiends. But if so be
Thou dar'st not this, and that to prove more fortunes
Thou art tir'd: then, in a word, I also am
Longer to live most weary, and present
My throat to thee:—
Which not to cut, would show thee but a fool;
Since I have ever followed thee with hate,
Drawn tuns of blood out of thy country's breast,
And cannot live but to thy shame, unless
It be to do thee service.

Auf. O, Marcius, Marcius,
Each word thou'st spoke hath weeded from my heart
A root of ancient envy.
Let me twine
Mine arms about that body, where against
My grained ash a hundred times hath broke,
And scar'd the moon with splinters! Here I clip

The anvil of my sword ; and do contest
As hotly and as nobly with thy love,
As ever in ambitious strength I did
Contend against thy valour.

Cor. You bless me, gods !

Auf. Therefore, most absolute sir, if thou wilt have
The leading of thine own revenges, take
The one half of my commission ; and set down,—
As best thou art experienced, since thou know'st
Thy country's strength and weakness,—thine own
ways :

Whether to knock against the gates of Rome,
Or rudely visit them in parts remote,
'To fright them, ere destroy. But come, come in :

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Let me commend thee first to those, that shall
Say, *Yea*, to thy desires.—A thousand welcomes !
And more a friend, than e'er an enemy ;
Yet, Marcius, that was much. Your hand !—most
welcome !

[*Exeunt, L.H.*]

SCENE III.—*Rome.—A Street.*

Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS, L.H.

Sic. We hear not of him, neither need we fear him ;
His remedies are tame.

Bru. We stood to't in good time. Is this Mene-
nius ?

Sic. 'Tis he, 'tis he : O, he is grown most kind
Of late.—Hail, sir !

Enter MENENIUS, R.H.

Men. Hail to you both ! (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Sic. Your Coriolanus, sir, is not much miss'd
But with his friends : the commonwealth doth stand ;
And so would do, were he more angry at it.

Men. All's well, and might have been much better,
if

He could have temporiz'd.

Sic. Where is he, hear you?

Men. Nay, I hear nothing; his mother and his wife
Hear nothing from him.

Bru. There is a slave, whom we have put in prison,
Reports, the Volscians with two several powers
Are entered in the Roman territories;
And with the deepest malice of the war
Destroy what lies before them.

Men. 'Tis Aufidius,
Who, hearing of our Marcius' banishment,
'Thrusts forth his horns again into the world;
Which were inshell'd, when Marcius stood for Rome,*
And durst not once peep out.

Enter APPIUS, R.H.

App. The nobles, in great earnestness, are going
All to the senate-house: some news is come,
That turns their countenances.

Sic. 'Tis this slave;—
Go whip him 'fore the people's eyes:—his raising!
Nothing but his report!

App. Yes, worthy sir,
The slave's report is seconded; and more,
More fearful, is delivered.

Sic. What more fearful?

App. It is spoke freely out of many mouths,
(How probable, I do not know,) that Marcius,
Join'd with Aufidius, leads a power 'gainst Rome.

Sic. This is most likely!

Bru. Rais'd only, that the weaker sort may wish
Good Marcius home again.

Sic. The very trick on't.

Men. This is unlikely: (*Crosses to R.H.*)
He and Aufidius can no more atune†,
Than violentest contrariety.

Let's to the senate-house.

[*Exeunt, R.H.*]

* Stood up in its defence.—† Unite, come to a reconciliation.

SCENE IV.—*A Plain, near Rome.**Enter* R.H. U.E.*Two Men bearing Standards—Antium and Volsci.**Six Men, with drawn Swords, ranged two and two.**Sextus.**Four Men, with drawn swords, ranged two and two.**Narius.**Four Men, bearing Spears, ranged two and two.**Aruns.**Two Men bearing Spears.**Coriolanus.**Banners—Fish, Dragon, Hawk.**Fourteen Men bearing Spears, ranged two and two.*

HOW TO DRESS THE STAGE, AFTER THE PROCESSION.

*Two Men with Spears and Shields.**Do. Do. Do.**Do. Do. Do.**Do. Do. Do.**Do. Do. Do.**Two Men with Spears. Two Men with Spears.**Banners—Hawk, Dragon and Fish.**Two Men with Spears.**Aruns.**Two Men with Spears.**Do. Do.**Narius.**Two Men with drawn Swords.**Do. Do.**Sextus.**Two Men with drawn Swords.**Do. Do.**Banners—Antium and Volsci.**Lucius.**Volusius.—Aufidius.—Coriolanus.**(Flourish of Trumpets.)*

Cor. No more;—I merit not this lavish praise.
 True, we have driven the Roman legions back,
 Defeated and disgrac'd:—but what is done?
 Nothing, ye Volscians.—
 Come on, my brave companions of the war,
 Come, let us finish at one mighty stroke
 The toil of lab'ring fate,—we will, or perish.—
 While, noble Tullus, you protect the camp,
 I with my troops, all chosen men of valour,
 And well approv'd to day, will storm the city.
(Trumpet sounds a parley, L.H.)

Enter LUCIUS, L.H.

Luc. My lord, a herald is arriv'd from Rome,
 To say, a députation from the senate,
 Attended by the ministers of heaven,
 A venerable train of priests and flamens,
 Is on the way, address'd to you.

Cor. To me!

What can this message mean?—Stand to your arms,
 Ye Volscian troops; and let these Romans pass
 Betwixt the low'ring frowns of double files.
 What! do they think so lightly of my wrongs,
 To slake my vengeance with a few soft words?
 Come, fellow soldiers; Tullus, come, and see
 How I maintain the honours you have done me.

[Flourish of Trumpets.—Exeunt Coriolanus attended by all but Aufidius and Volusius.]

Volu. Are we not, Tullus, failing in our duty,
 Not to attend our general?

Auf. How! what said'st thou?

Volu. Methought, my lord, his parting orders were,
 We should attend the triumph now preparing
 O'er all his foes at once,—Romans and Volscians.—
 Come, we shall give offence.

Auf. *(Aside.)* His words are daggers to my heart:
 I feel

Their truth, but am asham'd to own my folly.

Volu. O shame ! O infamy ! the thought consumes me !

To see a Roman
Borne on our shoulders to immortal fame,
Just in the happy moment that decided
The long dispute of ages, that, for which
Our generous ancestors had toil'd and bled :
To see him then step in; and steal our glory !
O, that we first had perish'd all ! A people,
Who cannot find in their own proper force
Their own protection, are not worth the saving.

Auf. It must have way; I will no more suppress it,—(*Aside.*)

Know then, my valiant friend, no less than thee,
His conduct hurts me, and upbraids my folly.
I wake as from a dream. What dæmon mov'd me ?
What doating generosity, to exalt him
To the same level, nay, above myself ?
To yield him the command of half my troops ?
That, that was madness,
Was weak, was mean, unworthy of a man !—
How shall I from this labyrinth escape ?
Must it then be ? What cruel genius dooms me,
In war or peace, to creep beneath his fortune ?

Volu. That genius is thyself. If thou can'st bear
The very thought of stooping to this Roman,
Thou from that moment art his vassal, Tullus ;
By that thou dost acknowledge, parent nature
Has form'd him thy superior. But if, fix'd
Upon the base of manly resolution,
Thou say'st,—I will be free,—I will command,—
I and my country ;—then,—O, never doubt it,
We shall find means to crush this vain intruder :
Even I myself,—this hand ;—nay, hear me, Tullus ;—
'Tis not yet come to that, that last resource :
I do not say, we should employ the dagger,
While other, better means are in our power.

Auf. No, my Volusius, fortune will not drive us,
Or I am much deceived, to that extreme :

We shall not want the strongest fairest plea,
 To give a solemn sanction to his fate;
 He will betray himself. Whate'er his rage
 Of passion talks, a weakness for his country
 Sticks in his soul, and he is still a Roman.
 Soon shall we see him tempted to the brink
 Of this sure precipice;—then down at once,
 Without remorse, we hurl him to perdition.

(*Trumpet sounds, L.H.*)

But hark,—the trumpet calls us to a scene
 I should detest; if not from hope we thence
 May gather matter to mature our purpose.

[*Exeunt, L.H.*]

SCENE V.—*Rome.—A Street.*

Enter MENENIUS, L.H. meeting BRUTUS and SICINIUS,
R.H.

Men. O, you have made good work!

Bru. What news? What news?

Sic. Pray now, your news?

Men. You have made good work,
 You, and your apron-men; you that stood so much
 Upon the voice of occupation*, and
 The breath of garlic-eaters!

Sic. We're all undone, unless
 The noble man have mercy.

Men. Who shall ask it?
 The tribunes cannot do't for shame; the people
 Deserve such pity of him, as the wolf
 Does of the shepherds.
 If he were putting to my house the brand
 That should consume it, I have not the face
 To say, '*Beseech you, cease.*—You have made fair
 hands,
 You and your crafts! you have crafted fair!

Enter a Troop of CITIZENS, R.H. S.E.

Here come the clusters.—

* Occupation is here used for mechanics, men occupied in daily business.

You are they (*Crosses to them.*)
 That made the air unwholesome, when you cast
 Your stinking, greasy caps, in hooting at
 Coriolanus' exile. Now he's coming;
 And not a hair upon a soldier's head,
 Which will not prove a whip; as many coxcombs,
 As you threw caps up, will he tumble down,
 And pay you for your voices. 'Tis no matter;
 If he could burn us all into one coal,
 We have deserv'd it.

3. *Cit.* For mine own part,
 When I said, *Banish him*, I said, 'twas pity.

2. *Cit.* And so did I.

1. *Cit.* And so did I! And, to say the truth, so did
 very many of us: that we did, we did for the best;
 and though we willingly consented to his banishment,
 yet it was against our will.

Men. You are goodly things,—you voices!—
 You have made
 Good work, you and your cry*.
 But here's Cominius; he will tell you news.

*Enter COMINIUS, and Six Senators, who pass over
 to L.H.*

Have you prevail'd? Will he have mercy on us?
 What hope has Rome yet? How did he receive you?

Com. He would not seem to know me.

Men. Do you hear? (*To the people.*)

Com. Yet one time he did call me by my name;
 I urg'd our old acquaintance, and the drops
 That we have bled together. Coriolanus
 He would not answer to: forbad all names:
 He was a kind of nothing, titleless,
 'Till he had forg'd himself a name i' the fire
 Of burning Rome.

Men. Why, so; you've made good work:
 A pair of tribunes that have rack'd† for Rome,

* Alluding to a pack of hounds.—† To rack, means to harrass by
 exactions.

To make coals cheap : a noble memory !

Com. I minded him, how royal 'twas to pardon
When it was least expected. He reply'd,
It was a bare petition of a state
To one whom they had punished.

Men. Very well ;
Could he say less ?

Com. I offered to awaken his regard
For his private friends. His answer to me was,
He could not stay to pick them in a pile
Of noisome, musty chaff: He said, 'twas folly,
For one poor grain or two, to leave unburnt,
And still to nose the offence.

Men. For one poor grain
Or two? I am one of those ; his mother, wife,
His child, and this brave fellow too, we are the grains
You are the musty chaff ; and you are smelt
Above the moon : we must be burnt for you.

Sic. Nay, pray, be patient : If you refuse your aid
In this so never-needed help, yet do not
Upbraid us with our distress. But, sure, if you
Would be your country's pleader, your good tongue,
More than the instant army we can make,
Might stop our countryman.

Men. No ; I'll not meddle.

Sic. I pray you, go to him.

Men. What should I do ?

Bru. Only make trial what your love can do,
For Rome, towards Marcius.

Com. He'll never hear him.

Sic. Not ?

Com. I tell you, he does sit in gold*, his eye
Red as 'twould burn Rome ; and his injury
The gaoler to his pity. I kneel'd before him :
'Twas very faintly he said, *Rise* ; dismissed me
Thus, with his speechless hand. What he would do,
He sent in writing after me ; what he would not,
Bound with an oath, to yield to his conditions :

* He is enthroned in all the pomp and pride of imperial splendour.

So, that all hope is vain,
 Unless his noble mother, and his wife ;
 Who, as I hear, mean to solicit him
 For mercy to his country.

Men. See you yond' coign o'the capitol, yond' corner stone?

Sic. Why, what of that?

Men. If it be possible for you to displace it with your little finger, there is some hope the ladies of Rome, especially his mother, may prevail with him.

Sic. Is it possible, that so short a time can alter the condition of a man?

Men. There is differency between a grub, and a butterfly; yet your butterfly was a grub. This Marcius is grown from man to dragon: he has wings; he's more than a creeping thing.

Sic. He lov'd his mother dearly.

Men. So did he me: and he no more remembers his mother now, than an eight year old horse. Mark what mercy his mother shall bring from him: there is no more mercy in him, than there is milk in a male tiger; that shall our poor city find: and all this is long of you.

1. *Cit.* O doleful tidings!

2. *Cit.* O woeful day!

3. *Cit.* What will become of us?

Omnes. Oh! oh! oh!

1. *Cit.* Let us seize the two tribunes that did banish him, and throw them down the Tarpeian rock.

Sic. O, good Menenius, save us!

Bru. Stand our friend!

Men. (*Crosses to L.H.*) Not I; they may hang, drown, burn, or break your worthless necks from the rock, 'tis all one to me. [*Exit, L.H.*]

All. Away with them, away with them!

Com. Hear me, fellow citizens!

Suspend awhile your anger, till you hear
 How the entreaties of his mother, wife,
 And our most noble matrons, work upon him;
 They yet may bring us peace.

All. We will, we will.

Com. The Roman Gods prosper their embassy!

[*Exeunt, Brutus, Sicinius, Cominius, and Senators,*
L.H. Citizens, R.H.]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Volscian Camp.*

DISPOSITION OF THE STAGE WHEN THE ACT COMMENCES.

Twelve Lictors.

Ten Men with Spears and Shields.

Two Battering Rams.

Eight Men with Swords and Shields.

Six Men with Spears and Shields.

Banners—Fish, Antium, Hawk, Volsci and Fame.

Two Men with Spears and Shields.

Two Men with Spears.

Raven.

Ram.

Appius.

Two Men with Spears and Shields.

Raised Seats for Six Senators.

Pegasus.

Six Men with Swords and Shields.

Fulvius.

Two Men with Spears and Shields.

Two Men with Spears and Shields.

Lion.

Dragon.

Volusius.

Sextus.

Four Men with Spears and Shields.

*State
Chairs.*

Aufidius.

Sphinx.

Coriolanus.

Navius.

Four Men with Spears and Shields.

*Goat.**Lucius.**Two Men with Spears and Shields.**Four Men with Spears and Shields.**Boar.**Antium.**Aruns.*

R.H.

L.H.

Cor. Here, noble Tullus, sit, and judge my conduct;

Nor spare to check me, if I act amiss.

Auf. Marcius, the Volscian fate is in thy hand.

(*Music at a distance, R.H.U.E.*)

Enter VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, young MARCIUS, VALERIA, and Roman Ladies, in mourning habits,

R.H. U.E.

Cor. My wife comes foremost; then the honour'd mould

Wherein this trunk was fram'd, and in her hand
The grand child to her blood. But, out, affection!

All bond and privilege of nature, break!

Let it be virtuous, to be obstinate.—

(*Virgilia bows.*)

What is that curt'sy worth or those doves' eyes,

Which can make gods forsworn? (*Volumnia bows.*)

My mother bows;

As if Olympus to a mole hill should

In supplication nod: and my young boy

Hath an aspect of intercession, which

Great nature cries, *Deny not.*—Let the Volscians

Plough Rome, and harrow Italy;

I'll stand,

As if a man were author of himself,

And knew no other kin.

Vir. My lord and husband!

Cor. I melt, and am not

Of stronger earth than others.—

O, a kiss,
 Long as my exile, sweet as my revenge !
 Now by the jealous queen of heav'n*, that kiss
 I carried from thee, dear ; and my true lip
 Hath virgin'd it e'er since.—You gods ! I prate,
 And the most noble mother of the world,
 Leave unsaluted : sink, my knee, i'the earth ;
(*Kneels.*)

Of thy deep duty more impression show
 Than that of common sons.

Vol. O, stand up bless'd !—

Thou art my warrior ;

I help to frame thee.—Do you know this lady ?
(*Pointing to Valeria.*)

Cor. The noble sister of Publicola,
 The moon of Rome ; chaste as the icicle,
 That's curd'd by the frost from purest snow,
 And hangs on Dian's temple.

Vol. This is a poor epitome of yours,
(*Presenting young Marcius.*)

Which by the interpretation of full time
 May show like all yourself.

Cor. The god of soldiers,
 With the consent of supreme Jove†, inform
 Thy thoughts with nobleness ; that thou may'st prove
 To shame invulnerable, and stick i'the wars
 Like a great sea-mark, standing every flaw‡,
 And saving those that eye thee !

Vol. Your knee, sirrah. (*Boy kneels.*)

Cor. That's my brave boy.

Vol. Even he, your wife, this lady, and myself,
 Are suitors to you.

Cor. I beseech you, peace :
 Or, if you'd ask, remember this before ;
 The things I have forsworn to grant, may never
 Be held by you denials ?—Do not bid me

* That is, by *Juno*, the guardian of marriage, and consequently the avenger of connubial perfidy.

† This is inserted with great decorum. Jupiter was the tutelary god of Rome.

‡ That is, every gust, every storm.

Dismiss my soldiers, or capitulate
 Again with Rome's mechanics :—tell me not
 Wherein I seem unnatural :—desire not
 To allay my rages and revenges, with
 Your colder reasons.

Vol. O, no more, no more !
 You have said, you will not grant us any thing ;
 For we have nothing else to ask, but that
 Which you deny already : yet we will ask ;
 That, if you fail in our request, the blame
 May hang upon your hardness : therefore hear us.

Cor. Aufidius, and you Volscians, mark ; for we'll
 Hear nought from Rome in private.—(*Sits.*)—Your
 request? (*To Volumnia.*)

Vol. Think with thyself,
 How more unfortunate than all living women
 Are we come hither :—
 For either thou
 Must, as a foreign recreant, be led
 With manacles through our streets ; or else
 Triumphantly tread on thy country's ruin ;
 And bear the palm, for having bravely shed
 Thy wife and children's blood.

Cor. I have sat too long. (*Offers to rise.*)

Vol. Nay, go not from us thus.
 If it were so, that our request did tend
 To save the Romans, thereby to destroy
 The Volscians whom you serve, you might condemn us
 As poisonous of your honour ; no : our suit
 Is, that you reconcile them : while the Volscians
 May say, *This mercy we have show'd* ; the Romans,
This we receiv'd ; and each in either side
 Give the all-hail to thee, and cry, *Be bless'd*
For making up this peace !

Cor. Those walls contain the most corrupt of men,
 Insolent foes to worth, the foes of virtue.

Vol. Daughter, speak you ;
 He cares not for your weeping,—Speak thou, boy ;
 Perhaps, thy childishness will move him more
 Than can our reasons. There is no man in the world

More bound to his mother, ye here he lets me prate,
 Like one i'the stocks. Thou hast never in thy life
 Show'd thy dear mother any courtesy ;
 When she, (poor hen !) fond of no second brood,
 Has cluck'd thee to the wars, and safely home,
 Laden with honour.

Auf. See, see, Volusius, how the strong emotions
 Of powerful nature shake his inmost soul !
 See, how they tear him !—If he long resist them,
 He is a god, or something worse than man.

(*Aside to Volusius.*)

Vol. He turns away :

Down, ladies ; let us shame him with our knees.

Nay, behold us : (*All Kneel.*)

This boy, that cannot tell what he would have,
 But kneels, and holds up hands, for fellowship,
 Does reason* our petition with more strength,
 Than thou hast to deny't.—Come let us go : (*They rise.*)
 This fellow had a Volscian to his mother ;
 His wife is in Corioli, and his child
 Like him by chance :—yet give us our despatch :—
 I am hush'd until our city be afire,
 And then I'll speak a little.

Vir. Since, Coriolanus, thou dost still retain,
 In spite of all thy mother now has pleaded,
 Thy dreadful purpose ; ah, how much in vain
 Were it for me to join my supplications !
 The voice of thy Virgilia, once so pleasing,
 How shall it hope to touch the husband's heart,
 When proof against the tears of such a parent ?
 But I must weep.—O, permit me,
 To shed my gushing tears upon thy hand,
 And take my last farewell !

Cor. Leave me.

Vir. I obey.—How bitter thus to part,
 Upon such terms to part, perhaps for ever !
 But, tell me, ere I hence unroot my feet,
 When to my lonely home I shall return,—

Cor. Come and complete my happiness at Antium,

* Does argue for us and our petition.

You, and my honour'd mother :—
There shall you see with what respect the Volseians
Will treat the wife, and mother, of their general.

Vol. Treat us thyself with more respect, my son,
Nor dare to shock our ears with such proposals.
Shall we desert our country,—we,—who come
To plead her cause?—Ah, no—a grave in Rome
Would better please me, than a throne at Antium.

Cor. Cease, cease, to torture me :
You only tear my heart, but cannot shake it.
By the immortal gods,—

Vir. O, vow not our destruction !
(*Falling on her knees.*)

Vol. Daughter, rise :
Let us no more before the Volseian people
Expose ourselves a spectacle of shame.—
Hear me, proud man!—I have
A heart as stout as thine. I came not hither,
To be sent back rejected, baffled, sham'd,
Hateful to Rome, because I am thy mother :
A Roman matron knows, in such extremes,
What part to take.——
Go, barbarous son ; go, double paricide ;
Rush o'er my corse to thy belov'd revenge !
Tread on the bleeding breast of her, to whom
Thou ow'st thy life!—Lo, thy first victim.

(*Drawing a dagger.*)

Cor. (*Starting from his chair and seizing her hand.*)
Ha !

What dost thou mean ?

Vol. To die, while Rome is free.

Cor. O, set not thus
My treacherous heart in arms against my reason.—
Here, here thy dagger will be well employ'd,—
Pity me, generous Volcians !—You are men—
Must it then be?—My stifled words refuse
A passage to the throes that wring my heart.

Vol. Nay, if thou yieldest, yield like Coriolanus ;
And what thou do'st, do nobly.

Cor. There,—'tis done :—
Thine is the triumph, Nature !—Ah, Volumnia,

Rome by thy aid is sav'd,—but thy son lost!

Vol. He never can be lost, who saves his country.

Cor. Ye matrons, guardians of the Roman safety,
We grant the truce you ask.—

Volscians, we raise the siege.

*(Coriolanus turns to the Roman ladies, who retire
in the order they entered, R.H. U.E.)*

Auf. 'Tis as we wish'd, Volusius.—

But mark me well ;—one offer more

My honour bids me make to this proud man ;

If he reject it,

His blood be on his head.

(To Volusius.)

Volu. Well, I obey.

(To Aufidius.)

*(When Coriolanus returns, Volusius and the
officers, L.H. advance to centre of the Stage ;
three standards in centre come forward to
officers ; the bearers of swords and shields
also advance. Volsci and Fame, bearers of
spears, from R.H.U.E. advance.)*

Cor. I plainly, Tullus, by your looks perceive
You disapprove my conduct.

Auf. I mean not to assail thee with the clamour
Of loud reproaches and the war of words ;
But, pride apart, and all that can pervert
The light of steady reason, here to make
A candid fair proposal.

Cor. Speak, I hear thee.

Auf. I need not tell thee, that I have perform'd
My utmost promise. Thou hast been protected ;
Hast had thy amplest, most ambitious wish ;
Thy wounded pride is heal'd, thy dear revenge
Completely sated ; and, to crown thy fortune,
At the same time, thy peace with Rome restor'd.
Thou art no more a Volscian, but a Roman.
Return, return ; thy duty calls upon thee
Still to protect the city thou hast sav'd ;
It still may be in danger from our arms.
Retire : I will take care thou mayst with safety.

Cor. With safety ?—Heavens !—and think'st thou,
Coriolanus

Will stoop to thee for safety ?—No ! my safeguard

Is in myself, a bosom void of blame—
 O, 'tis an act of cowardice and baseness,
 To seize the very time my hands are fetter'd
 By the strong chain of former obligation,
 The safe, sure, moment to insult me.—gods!
 Were I now free, as on that day I was
 When at Corioli I tam'd thy pride,
 This had not been.

Auf. Thou speak'st the truth; it had not.
 O, for that time again! propitious gods,
 If you will bless me, grant it!—Know, for that,
 For that dear purpose, I have now propos'd
 Thou should'st return. I pray thee, Marcius, do it;
 And we shall meet again on nobler terms.

Cor. Till I have clear'd my honour in your council,
 And prov'd before them all, to thy confusion,
 The falsehood of thy charge; as soon in battle
 I would before thee fly, and howl for mercy,
 As quit the station they have here assigned me.

(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Auf. Thou canst not hope acquittal from the
 Volscians.

Cor. I do:—nay more, expect their approbation,
 Their thanks. I will obtain them such a peace
 As thou durst never ask; a perfect union
 Of their whole nation with imperial Rome,
 In all her privileges, all her rights;
 By the just gods, I will.—What would'st thou more?

Auf. What would I more, proud Roman? This
 I would,—
 Fire the curs'd forest where these Roman wolves
 Haunt and infest their nobler neighbours round them;
 Extirpate from the bosom of this land
 A false perfidious people, who, beneath
 The mask of freedom, are a combination
 Against the liberty of human kind,—
 The genuine seed of outlaws and of robbers.

Cor. The seed of gods.—'Tis not for thee, vain
 boaster,—
 'Tis not for such as thou,—so often spar'd
 By her victorious sword, to speak of Rome,

But with respect, and awful veneration.—
 Whate'er her blots, whate'er her giddy factions,
 There is more virtue in one single year
 Of Roman story, than your Volscian annals
 Can boast through all their creeping dark duration.

Auf. I thank thy rage:—this full displays the
 traitor.

Cor. Traitor!—how now?—

Auf. Ay, traitor, Marcius.

Cor. Marcius!

Auf. Ay, Marcius, Caius Marcius; dost thou think
 I'll grace thee with that robbery, thy stol'n name
 Coriolanus, in Corioli?—

You lords and heads o'the state, perfidiously
 He has betray'd your business, and given up,
 For certain drops of salt, your city Rome
 (I say, your city,) to his wife and mother:
 Breaking his oath and resolution, like
 A twist of rotten silk; never admitting
 Counsel o'the war; but at his nurse's tears
 He whin'd and roar'd away your victory?
 That pages blush'd at him, and men of heart
 Look'd wond'ring each at other.

Cor. Hear'st thou, Mars?

Auf. Name not the god, thou boy of tears.—

Cor. Measureless liar, thou hast made my heart
 Too great for what contains it.—Boy!—
 Cut me to pieces, Volscians; men and lads,
 Stain all your edges on me.—Boy!—
 If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there,
 That, like an eagle in a dove-cote, I
 Flutter'd your Volscians in Corioli:
 Alone I did it.—Boy!—But let us part;—
 Lest my rash hand should do a hasty deed
 My cooler thought forbids.

Auf. I court

The worst thy sword can do; while thou from me,
 Hast nothing to expect, but sore destruction;
 Quit then this hostile camp. Once more I tell thee,
 Thou art not here one single hour in safety.

Cor. O, that I had thee in the field,

With six Aufidiuses, or more, thy tribe,
To use my lawful sword,—

Volu. Insolent villain! (*Volusius and other Vol-
scian Officers draw, and kill Coriolanus.*)

Auf. My lords when you shall know
The great danger
Which this man's life did owe you, you'll rejoice
That he is thus cut off. Please it your honours
To call me to your senate, I'll deliver
Myself your loyal servant, or endure
Your heaviest censure.—

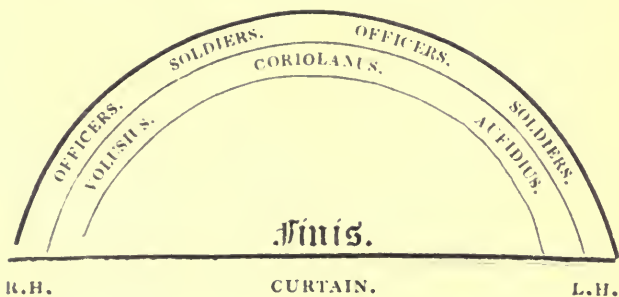
My rage is gone,
And I am struck with sorrow.
Bear from hence his body.
Let him be regarded
As the most noble corse, that ever herald
Did follow to his urn.

Beat, beat the drum, that it speak mournfully :
(*Muffled drum.*)

Trail your steel pikes. (*The Army lower their spears
and ensigns.*)—Though in your city he
Hath widow'd and unchilded many a one,
Which to this hour bewail the injury,
Yet he shall have a noble memory.

(*A dead march sounded.*)

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.



Oxberry's Edition.

ROSINA,

A COMIC OPERA;

By Mrs. Frances Brooke.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED

WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

BY W. OXBERRY, Comedian.

London.

PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS, BY W. SIMPKIN, AND
R. MARSHALL, STATIONERS' COURT, LUDGATE-STREET,
AND C. CHAPPLE, 66, PALL-MALL.

1820.

The following AIRS are omitted in the Representation.

AIR —CAPTAIN BELVILLE.

*From flower to flower gay roving,
The wanton butterfly
Does Nature's charms descry.
From flower to flower gay roving,
The wanton butterfly.*

*On wavy wings high mounting,
If chance some child pursues,
Forsakes the balmy dews ;
On wavy wings high mounting,
If chance some child pursues.*

*Thus wild, and ever changing,
A sportive butterfly,
I mock the whining sigh ;
Still wild, and ever changing,
A sportive butterfly.*

AIR.—BELVILLE.

*How blest, my fair, who on thy face
Uncheck'd by fear, may fondly gaze !
Who, when he breathes the tender sigh,
Beholds no anger in thine eye !*

*Ah, then, what joys await the swain,
Who ardent pleads, nor pleads in vain ;
Whose voice with rapture all divine,
Secure may say, " This heart is mine !"*

Remarks.



THIS little piece is almost without the pale of criticism ; it is not good enough for praise, nor bad enough for censure.— It exhibits nothing more than the outside of character, and every where shows strong marks of its French original. A Petite Opera, called *Les Moissonneurs*, is the piece from which it is borrowed, though that appears to have been suggested by the beautiful episode in Thomson's Autumn, and Lavinia again to have originated in the Ruth of the Sacred Writings.—There is nothing new under the sun.

But though criticism finds little to commend in it, this Drama has been very popular ; this, however, may, in a great measure, be attributed to the beautiful music with which Shield has embellished it ; the melodies, indeed, are of that kind, which must be eternal, as far as any human production can be so ; in listening to them, we seem to be transported to the country, to breathe the free air of its fields, to hear the song of the peasant and the lark, and mingle in the calm bustle of pastoral happiness. The music to this Opera is the amber that preserves the fly.

Mrs. Frances Brooke, whose maiden name was Moore, was the daughter of a clergyman, and the wife of the Rev. John Brooke, rector of Colney, in Norfolk, of St. Augustine, in the city of Norwich, and chaplain to the garrison of Quebec. Her husband died Jan. 21, 1789 ; and she herself on the 26th of the same month, at Sleaford, at the house of her son, who had preferment in that part of the country.

Mrs. Brooke was a lady of first rate abilities, and as remarkable for gentleness and suavity of manners, as for her literary talents. She wrote and published some admirable novels (among which were, *Lady Julia Mandeville*, *Emily Montague*, *Marquis of St. Forlaix*, and *The Excursion* ;) a periodical paper, called *The Old Maid* ; a translation of Milot's *Elements of the History of England* ; and the following dramas :—1. *Virginia*.—T. 2. *Siege of Sinope*.—T. 3. *Rosina*.—C.O. 4. *Marian*.—M.E.

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation, is generally one hour and a half.

Stage Directions.

By	R.H.	.	.	is meant	.	.	Right Hand.
	L.H.	.	.	.	.	.	Left Hand.
	S.E.	.	.	.	.	.	Second Entrance.
	U.E.	.	.	.	.	.	Upper Entrance.
	M.D.	.	.	.	.	.	Middle Door.
	D.F.	.	.	.	.	.	Door in Flat.
	R.H.D.	.	.	.	.	.	Right Hand Door.
	L.H.D.	.	.	.	.	.	Left Hand Door.

Costume.

MR. BELVILLE.

Blue coat, white waistcoat and buff breeches.

CAPTAIN BELVILLE.

Military undress.

WILLIAM.

Drab coloured frock coat, buff waistcoat, and drab-coloured breeches.

RUSTIC.

Drab-coloured Coventry coat, red waistcoat, and buff breeches.

IRISHMEN.

Brown jackets and breeches.

ROSINA.

Buff stay-bodice, white petticoat and apron, trimmed with buff and green.

PHŒBE.

Brown stay-bodice, blue stuff petticoat, and white apron.

DORCAS.

First dress.—Grey stuff gown, blue quilted coat, and check apron. Second dress.—White gown, black hat, and red cloak.

Villagers.—Stuff bodices, and petticoats.

Persons Represented.

As it was Originally Acted at Covent Garden.

<i>Mr. Belville</i>	Mr. Bannister.
<i>Captain Belville</i>	Mr. Cubit.
<i>William</i>	Mr. Kennedy.
<i>Rustic</i>	Mr. Davis.
<i>1st. Irishman</i>	Mr. Mahon.
<i>2nd. Irishman</i>	Mr. Egan.

<i>Rosina</i>	Mrs. Bannister.
<i>Dorcas</i>	Mrs. Pitt.
<i>Phæbe</i>	Mrs. Martyr.

	<i>Drury Lane.</i> 1819.	<i>Covent Garden.</i> 1819.
<i>Mr. Belville</i>	Mr. T. Cooke.	Mr. Duruset.
<i>Captain Belville</i>	Mr. Barnard.	Mr. Pyne.
<i>William</i>	Mr. Knight.	Mr. Taylor.
<i>Rustic</i>	Mr. Thorne.	Mr. I. Isaacs.
<i>1st. Irishman</i>	Mr. Smith.	Mr. Connor.
<i>2nd. Irishman</i>	Mr. Coveney.	Mr. Williams.
 <i>Rosina</i>	 Miss Povey.	 Miss M. Tree.
<i>Dorcas</i>	Mrs. Harlowe.	Mrs. Davenport.
<i>Phæbe</i>	Miss Kelly.	Miss Matthews.

Reapers, Gleaners, Servants, &c.

SCENE—A Village in the North.

ROSINA.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A rural prospect: on the left side a little hill with trees at the top; a spring of water rushes from the side, and falls into a natural bason below: on the right side a cottage, at the door of which is a bench of stone. At a distance a chain of mountains. The manor-house in view. A field of corn fills up the scene.*

After the Trio, the Sun is seen to rise; the door of the Cottage, R.H. is open, a Lamp burning just within; DORCAS, seated on a bench, is Spinning; ROSINA and PHŒBE, just within the door, are measuring Corn; WILLIAM comes from the top of the Stage; they sing the following Trio.

*When the rosy morn appearing
Paints with gold the verdant lawn,
Bees, on banks of thyme disporting,
Sip the sweets, and hail the dawn.*

*Warbling birds, the day proclaiming,
Carol sweet the lively strain;
They forsake their leafy dwelling,
To secure the golden grain.*

*See, content, the humble gleaner,
Take the scatter'd ears that fall!
Nature, all her children viewing,
Kindly bounteous, cares for all.*

(William retires with Phæbe, L.H.U.E.)

Ros. See! my dear Dorcas, what we gleaned yesterday in Mr. Belville's field! (*Coming forward, and showing the Corn at the Door.*)

Dor. Lord love thee! but take care of thyself: thou art but tender.

Ros. Indeed it does not hurt me. Shall I put out the lamp?

Dor. Do, dear; the poor must be sparing.

(*Rosina going to put out the Lamp, Dorcas looks after her and sighs; she returns hastily.*)

Ros. Why do you sigh, Dorcas?

Dor. I cannot bear it: it's nothing to Phœbe and me, but thou wast not born to labour.

(*Rising, and pushing away the Wheel.*)

Ros. Why should I repine? Heaven, which deprived me of my parents, and my fortune, left me health, content, and innocence. Nor is it certain that riches lead to happiness. Do you think the nightingale sings the sweeter for being in a gilded cage?

Dor. Sweeter, I'll maintain it, than the poor little linnet that thou pick'dst up half starved under the hedge yesterday, after its mother had been shot, and brought'st to life in thy bosom. Let me speak to his honour, he's main kind to the poor.

Ros. Not for the world, Dorcas; I want nothing; you have been a mother to me.

Dor. Would I could! Would I could! I ha' worked hard and 'arn'd money in my time; but now I am old and feeble, and am push'd about by every body. More's the pity, I say; it was not so in my young time; but the world grows wickeder every day. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Ros. Your age, my good Dorcas, requires rest; go into the cottage, whilst Phœbe and I join the gleaners, who are assembling from every part of the village.

Dor. Many a time have I carried thy dear mother, an infant, in these arms; little did I think a child of hers would live to share my poor pittance.—But I wo't grieve thee. (*Dorcas enters the Cottage, R.H. looking back affectionately at Rosina. Phœbe advances.*)

Phæ. What makes you so melancholy, Rosina? Mayhap it's because you have not a sweetheart? But you are so

proud, you won't let our young men come a-near you. You may live to repent being so scornful. (*Rosina retires.*)

AIR.

*When William at eve meets me down at the stile,
How sweet is the nightingale's song!
Of the day I forget all the labour and toil,
Whilst the moon plays yon branches among.*

*By her beams, without blushing, I hear him complain,
And believe every word of his song:
You know not how sweet 'tis to love the dear swain,
Whilst the moon plays yon branches among.*

(During the last Stanza, William appears at the end of the Scene, and makes signs to Phœbe; who, when it is finished, steals softly to him, and they disappear, L.H. Rosina comes forward.)

Ros. How small a part of my evils is poverty! And how little does Phœbe know the heart she thinks insensible! the heart which nourishes a hopeless passion. I blest, like others, Belville's gentle virtues, and knew not that 'twas love. Unhappy! lost Rosina!

AIR.

*The morn returns, in saffron drest,
But not to sad Rosina rest.
The blushing morn awakes the strain,
Awakes the tuneful choir;
But sad Rosina ne'er again
Shall strike the sprightly lyre.*

Rust. (*Without, L.H.*) To work, my hearts of oak, to work; here the sun is half an hour high, and not a stroke struck yet.

Enter RUSTIC, singing, L.H. followed by Reapers.

AIR.

Rust. See, ye swains, yon streaks of red
Call you from your slothful bed:

*Late you till'd the fruitful soil ;
See! where harvest crowns your toil !*

*Cho. Late you till'd the fruitful soil ;
See! where harvest crowns your toil.*

*Rust. As we reap the golden corn,
Laughing Plenty fills her horn :
What would gilded pomp avail
Should the peasant's labour fail ?*

*Cho. What would gilded pomp avail
Should the peasant's labour fail ?*

*Rust. Ripen'd fields your cares repay,
Sons of labour haste away ;
Bending, see the waving grain
Crown the year, and cheer the swain.*

*Cho. Bending, see the waving grain
Crown the year, and cheer the swain.*

Rust. Hist! there's his honour. Where are all the lazy Irishmen I hir'd yesterday at market.

Enter BELVILLE, L.H.U.E. followed by two IRISHMEN.

1st. Irish. Is it us he's talking of, Paddy! Then the devil may thank him for his good commendations.

Bel. You are too severe, Rustic; the poor fellows came three miles this morning; therefore I made them stop at the manor-house to take a little refreshment.

1st. Irish. Bless your sweet face, my jewel, and all those who take your part. Bad luck to myself, if I would not, with all the veins of my heart, split the dew before your feet in a morning. *(To Belville.)*

Rust. If I do speak a little cross, it's for your honour's good. *(The Reapers cut the Corn, and make it into Sheaves. Rosina follows, and glean, L.H.)*

Rust. *(Seeing Rosina.)* What a dickens does this girl do here? Keep back; wait till the reapers are off the field; do like the other gleaners.

Ros. *(Timidly.)* If I have done wrong, sir, I will put what I have glean'd down again.

(She lets fall the Ears she had gleaned.)

Bel. How can you be so unfeeling, Rustic? She is lovely, virtuous, and in want. Let fall some ears, that she may glean the more.

Rust. Your honour is too good by half.

Bel. No more: gather up the corn she has let fall. Do as I command you.

Rust. There, take the whole field, since his honour chooses it. (*Putting the Corn into her apron.*) [*Exit, L.H.*]

Ros. I will not abuse his goodness.

(*Retires gleanings, L.H.*)

2d. Irish. Upon my soul now, his honour's no churl of the wheat, whate'er he may be of the barley.

(*They join the Reapers.*)

Bel. (*Looking after Rosina.*) What bewitching softness! There is a blushing, bashful gentleness, an almost infantine innocence in that lovely countenance, which it is impossible to behold without emotion! She turns this way: what bloom on that cheek! 'Tis the blushing-down of the peach.

AIR.

*Her mouth, which a smile,
Devoid of all guile,
Half opens to view,
Is the bud of the rose,
In the morning that blows,
Impearl'd with the dew.*

*More fragrant her breath
Than the flow'r-scented heath,
At the dawning of day;
The hawthorn in bloom,
The lily's perfume,
Or the blossoms of May.*

Enter CAPTAIN BELVILLE, L.H. in a Riding-dress.

Capt. B. Good morrow, brother; you are early abroad.

Bel. My dear Charles, I am happy to see you. True, I find, to the first of September.

Capt. B. I meant to have been here last night, but one of my wheels broke, and I was obliged to sleep at a village six miles distant, where I left my chaise, and took a boat

down the river at day-break. But your corn is not off the ground.

Bel. You know our harvest is late in the north; but you will find all the lands cleared on the other side the mountain.

Capt. B. And pray, brother, how are the partridges this season?

Bel. There are twenty coveys within sight of my house, and the dogs are in fine order.

Capt. B. The gamekeeper is this moment leading them round. (*Crosses to R.H.*)—I am fir'd at the sight. But where is my little rustic charmer? O! there she is: I am transported. (*Aside.*)—Pray, brother, is not that the little girl whose dawning beauty we admired so much last year?

Bel. It is, and more lovely than ever. I shall dine in the field with my reapers to-day, brother: will you share our rural repast, or have a dinner prepared at the manor-house?

Capt. B. By no means: pray let me be of your party: your plan is an admirable one, especially if your girls are handsome. I'll walk round the field, and meet you at dinner-time. [*Exit Belville, L.H.C.E.*]

AIR.

*By the dawn to the downs we repair,
With bosoms right jocund and gay,
And gain more than pheasant or hare—
Gain health by the sports of the day.*

*Mark! mark! to the right hand, prepare—
See Diana!—she points!—see, they rise—
See, they float on the bosom of air!
Fire away! whilst loud echo replies,
Fire away!*

*Hark! the volley resounds to the skies!
Whilst echo in thunder replies!
In thunder replies,
And resounds to the skies,
Fire away! Fire away! Fire away!*

(*Rosina re-appears, L.H. Captain Belville goes up to her, gleans a few Ears, and presents them to her; she refuses them, and runs out; he follows her.*)

Enter WILLIAM, L.H. speaking at the side Scene.

Will. Lead the dogs back, James; the captain won't shoot to-day. (*Seeing Rustic and Phœbe behind.*)—Indeed, so close! I don't half like it.

Enter RUSTIC and PHŒBE, R.H.

Rust. That's a good girl! Do as I bid you, and you shan't want encouragement. (*He goes up to the Reapers, and William comes forward.*)

Will. O no, I dare say she won't. So, Mrs. Phœbe!

Phœ. And so, Mr. William, if you go to that!

Will. A new sweetheart, I'll be sworn; and a pretty comely lad he is: but he's rich, and that's enough to win a woman.

Phœ. I don't deserve this of you, William: but I'm rightly sarved, for being such an easy fool. You think, mayhap, I'm at my last prayers; but you may find yourself mistaken.

Will. You do right to cry out first; you think, belike, that I did not see you take that posy from Harry.

Phœ. And you, belike, that I did not catch you tying up one, of cornflowers and wild roses, for the miller's maid; but I'll be fool'd no longer; I have done with you, Mr. William.

Will. I shan't break my heart, Mrs. Phœbe. The miller's maid loves the ground I walk on.

DUETT.—WILLIAM and PHŒBE.

Will. *I've kiss'd and I've prattled to fifty fair maids,
And chang'd them as oft, d'ye see!
But of all the fair maidens that dance on the green,
The maid of the mill for me.*

Phœ. *There's fifty young men have told me fine tales,
And call'd me the fairest she:
But of all the gay wrestlers that sport on the green,
Young Harry's the lad for me.*

Will. Her eyes are as black as the sloe in the hedge,
 Her face like the blossoms in May,
 Her teeth are as white as the new-shorn flock,
 Her breath like the new-made hay.

Phæ. He's tall and he's straight as the poplar tree,
 His cheeks are as fresh as the rose ;
 He looks like a 'squire of high degree,
 When drest in his Sunday clothes.

Will. I've kiss'd and I've prattled, &c.

Phæ. There's fifty young men, &c.

[*Exeunt ; Phæ. R.H. Will. L.H.*

ROSINA runs across the Stage, R.H. CAPTAIN BELVILLE following her.

Capt. B. Stay and hear me, Rosina. Why will you fatigue yourself thus? Only homely girls are born to work.—Your obstinacy is vain; you shall hear me.

Ros. Why do you stop me, sir? My time is precious. When the gleanings season is over, will you make up my loss?

Capt. B. Yes.

Ros. Will it be any advantage to you to make me lose my day's work?

Capt. B. Yes.

Ros. Would it give you pleasure to see me pass all my days in idleness?

Capt. B. Yes.

Ros. We differ greatly then, sir. I only wish for so much leisure as makes me return to my work with fresh spirit. We labour all the week, 'tis true; but then how sweet is our rest on Sunday!

AIR.

*Whilst with village maids I stray,
 Sweetly wears the joyous day ;
 Cheerful glows my artless breast,
 Mild content the constant guest.*

Capt. B. Mere prejudice, child ; you will know better. I pity you, and will make your fortune.

Ros. Let me call my mother, sir ; I am young, and can support myself by my labour ; but she is old and helpless, and your charity will be well bestowed. Please to transfer to her the bounty you intended for me.

Capt. B. Why—as to that—

Ros. I understand you, sir ; your compassion does not extend to old women.

Capt. B. Really—I believe not.

Enter DORCAS, from the Cottage.

Ros. You are just come in time, mother. I have met with a generous gentleman, whose charity inclines him to succour youth.

Dor. 'Tis very kind.—And old age—

Ros. He'll tell you that himself.

(Goes into the Cottage.)

Dor. I thought so.—Sure, sure, 'tis no sin to be old.

Capt. B. You must not judge of me by others, honest Dorcas. I am sorry for your misfortunes, and wish to serve you.

Dor. And to what, your honour, may I owe this kindness ?

Capt. B. You have a charming daughter—

Dor. I thought as much. A vile, wicked man !—

(Aside.)

Capt. B. Beauty like hers might find a thousand resources in London ; the moment she appears there, she will turn every head.

Dor. And is your honour sure her own won't turn at the same time ?

Capt. B. She shall live in affluence, and take care of you too, Dorcas.

Dor. I guess your honour's meaning ; but you are mistaken, sir. If I must be a trouble to the dear child, I had rather owe my bread to her labour than her shame.

(Goes into the Cottage, and shuts the Door.)

Capt. B. These women astonish me ; but I won't give it up so.

Enter RUSTIC, *crossing the Stage*, L.H.

Capt. B. A word with you, Rustic.

Rust. I am in a great hurry, your honour; I am going to hasten dinner.

Capt. B. I shan't keep you a minute. Take these five guineas.

Rust. For whom, sir?

Capt. B. For yourself. And this purse.

Rust. For whom, sir?

Capt. B. For Rosina; they say she is in distress, and wants assistance.

Rust. What pleasure it gives me to see you so charitable! But why give me money, sir?

Capt. B. Only to—tell Rosina there is a person who is very much interested in her happiness.

Rust. How much you will please his honour by this! He takes mightily to Rosina, and prefers her to all the young women in the parish.

Capt. B. Prefers her! Ah! you sly rogue!

(Laying his hand on Rustic's shoulder.)

Rust. Your honour's a wag; but I'm sure I meant no harm.

Capt. B. Give her the money, and tell her she shall never want a friend; but not a word to my brother.

Rust. All's safe, your honour. [*Exit Capt. Belville*, R.H.] I don't vastly like this business. At the captain's age, this violent charity is a little dubious. I am his honour's servant, and it's my duty to hide nothing from him. I'll go seek his honour;—O, here he comes.

Enter BELVILLE, L.H.

Bel. Well, Rustic, have you any intelligence to communicate?

Rust. A vast deal, sir. Your brother begins to make good use of his money; he has given me these five guineas for myself, and this purse for Rosina.

Bel. For Rosina! 'Tis plain he loves her. (*Aside.*) Obey him exactly; but as distress renders the mind haughty, and

Rosina's situation requires the utmost delicacy, contrive to execute your commission in such a manner that she may not even suspect from whence the money comes.

Rust. I understand your honour.

Bel. Have you gained any intelligence in respect to Rosina?

Rust. I endeavour'd to get all I could from the old woman's grand-daughter; but all she knew was, that she was no kin to Dorcas, and that she had had a good bringing-up; but here come the reapers.

Enter CAPTAIN BELVILLE, R.H. followed by the Reapers.

FINALE.

Bel. *By this fountain's flow'ry side,
Drest in nature's blooming pride,
Where the poplar trembles high,
And the bees in clusters fly,
Whilst the herdsman on the hill
Listens to the falling rill,
Pride and cruel scorn away,
Let us share the festive day.*

Ros. *Taste our pleasures ye who may,*
Bel. *This is Nature's holiday.*
 Simple Nature ye who prize,
 Life's fantastic forms despise.

Cho. *Taste our pleasures ye who may,
This is Nature's holiday.*

Capt. B. *Blushing Bell, with downcast eyes,
Sighs and knows not why she sighs,
Tom is near her—we shall know—
How he eyes her—Is't not so?*

Cho. *Taste our pleasures ye who may,
This is Nature's holiday.*

Will. *He is fond, and she is shy;
He would kiss her!—fie!—oh, fie!*

*Mind thy sickle, let her be ;
By and by she'll follow thee.*

*Cho. Busy censurs, hence ! away !
This is Nature's holiday.*

*Rust. Now we'll quaff the nut-brown ale,
Then we'll tell the sportive tale ;
All is jest, and all is glee,
All is youthful jollity.*

*Cho. Taste our pleasures ye who may,
This is Nature's holiday.*

*Phæ. Lads and lasses, all adrance,
Carol blithe, and form the dance ;
Trip it lightly while you may,
This is Nature's holiday.*

*Cho. Trip it lightly while you may,
This is Nature's holiday.*

*(All rise ; the Dancers come down the Stage through
the Sheaves of Corn, which are removed ; the Dance
begins, and finishes the Act.)*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter RUSTIC, L.H.

Rust. This purse is the plague of my life ; I hate money when it is not my own. I'll e'en put in the five guineas he gave me for myself : I don't want it, and they do. They certainly must find it there. But I hear the cottage-door open. *(Puts the Purse on the Bench, and Retires, R.H.)*

Enter DORCAS and ROSINA, from the Cottage. Dorcas with a great Basket on her Arm, filled with Skeins of Thread.

Dor. I am just going, Rosina, to carry this thread to the weaver's.

Ros. This basket is too heavy for you: pray let me carry it. (*Takes the Basket from Dorcas, and sets it down on the Bench.*)

Dor. No, no. (*Peevishly.*)

Ros. If you love me, only take half; this evening, or to-morrow morning, I will carry the rest.—(*Takes part of the Skeins out of the Basket, and lays them on the Bench, looking affectionately on Dorcas.*) There, be angry with me if you please.

Dor. No, my sweet lamb, I am not angry; but beware of men.

Ros. Have you any doubts of my conduct, Dorcas?

Dor. Indeed I have not, love; and yet I am uneasy.

Enter CAPTAIN BELVILLE, L.H. unperceived.

Go back to the reapers, whilst I carry this thread.

Ros. I'll go this moment.

Dor. But as I walk but slow, and 'tis a good way, you may chance to be at home before me; so take the key.

Ros. I will.

Capt. B. (*Aside, while Dorcas feels in her pockets for the Key.*) Rosina to be at home before Dorcas! How lucky! I'll slip into the house, and wait her coming, if 'tis till midnight.

(*He goes, unperceived by them, into the Cottage.*)

Dor. Let nobody go into the house.

Ros. I'll take care.

Dor. But first I'll double-lock the door. (*Locks the Door, and going to take up the Basket, sees the Purse.*)

Good lack! What is here! a purse, as I live!

Ros. How!

Dor. Come, and see; 'tis a purse indeed.

Ros. Heav'ns! 'tis full of gold.

Dor. We must put up a bill at the church-gate, and re-

store it to the owner. 'The best way is to carry the money to his honour, and get him to keep it till the owner is found. You shall go with it, love.

Ros. Pray excuse me, I always blush so.

Dor. 'Tis nothing but childishness: but his honour will like your bashfulness better than too much courage.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Ros. I cannot support his presence;—my embarrassment—my confusion—a stronger sensation than that of gratitude agitates my heart.—Yet hope in my situation were madness.

AIR.

*Sweet transports, gentle wishes, go!
In vain his charms have gain'd my heart;
Since fortune, still to love a foe,
And cruel duty, bid us part.
Ah! why does duty chain the mind,
And part those souls which love has join'd?*

Enter WILLIAM, L.H.

Pray, William, do you know of any body that has lost a purse?

Will. I knows nothing about it.

Ros. Dorcas, however, has found one.

Will. So much the better for she.

Ros. You will oblige me very much if you will carry it to Mr. Belville, and beg him to keep it till the owner is found.

Will. Since you desire it, I'll go: it shan't be the lighter for my carrying.

Ros. That I am sure of, William. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Enter PHEBE, R.H.

Phœ. There's William; but I'll pretend not to see him.

AIR.

*Henry cult'd the flow'ret's bloom,
Marian lov'd the soft perfume,*

*Had playful kiss'd, but prudence near
Whisper'd timely in her ear,
Simple Marian, ah! beware;
Touch them not, for love is there.*

*(Throws away her Nosegay. While she is singing,
William turns, looks at her, whistles, and plays with
his Stick.)*

Will. That's Harry's posy; the slut likes me still. *(Aside.)*

Phæ. That's a copy of his countenance, I'm sartin; he
can no more help following me nor he can be hang'd.—

(Aside. William crosses again, singing.)

*Of all the fair maidens that dance on the green,
The maid of the mill for me.*

Phæ. I'm ready to choke wi' madness; but I'll not speak
first, an I die for't. *(William sings, throwing up his Stick,
and catching it.)*

Will. *Her eyes are as black as the sloe in the hedge,
Her face like the blossoms in May.*

Phæ. I can't bear it no longer;—you vile, ungrateful,
parfidious—But it's no matter.—I can't think what I could
see in you:—Harry loves me, and is a thousand times more
handsomer. *(Sings, sobbing at every word.)*

*Of all the gay wrestlers that sport on the green,
Young Harry's the lad for me.*

Will. He's yonder a reaping: shall I call him?

(Offers to go.)

Phæ. My grandmother leads me the life of a dog; and
it's all along of you.

Will. Well, then she'll be better temper'd now.

Phæ. I did not value her scolding of a brass farthing,
when I thought as how you were true to me.

Will. Wasn't I true to you! Look in my face, and say
that.

AIR.

*When bidden to the wake or fair,
The joy of each free-hearted swain,
Till Phæbe promis'd to be there,
I loiter'd, last of all the train.*

*If chance some fairing caught her eye,
The riband gay or silken glove,
With eager haste I ran to buy;
For what is gold compar'd to love?*

*My posy on her bosom plac'd,
Could Harry's sweeter scents exhale!
Her auburn locks my riband grac'd,
And flutter'd in the wanton gale.*

*With scorn she hears me now complain,
Nor can my rustic presents move:
Her heart prefers a richer swain,
And gold, alas! has banish'd love.*

(*Going, R.H.*)

Will. (Coming back.) Let's part friendly howsomever.
Bye, Phæbe: I shall always wish you well.

Phæ. Bye, William.

(*Cries, wiping her Eyes with her Apron.*)

Will. My heart begins to melt a little. (*Aside.*)—I lov'd you very well once, Phæbe: but you are grown so cross, and have such vagaries—

Phæ. I'm sure I never had no vagaries with you, William. But go; mayhap Kate may be angry.

Will. And who cares for she? I never minded her anger, nor her coaxing neither, till you were cross to me.

Phæ. (Holding up her Hands.) O the father! I cross to you, William?

Will. Did you not tell me, this very morning, as how you had done wi' me?

Phæ. One word's as good as a thousand. Do' you love me, William?

Will. Do I love thee? Do I love dancing on the green

better than thrashing in the barn ! Do I love a wake ; or a harvest-home ?

Phæ. Then I'll never speak to Harry again the longest day I have to live.

Will. I'll turn my back o'the miller's maid the first time I meet her.

Phæ. Will you indeed, and indeed ?

Will. Marry will I ; and more nor that, I'll go speak to the parson this moment :—I'm happier—zooks, I'm happier nor a lord or a 'squire of five hundred a-year.

DUETT.—PHÆBE and WILLIAM.

Phæ. *In gaudy courts, with aching hearts,
The great at fortune rail :
The hills may higher honours claim,
But peace is in the vale.*

Will. *See high-born dames, in rooms of state,
With midnight revels pale ;
No youth admires their fading charms,
For beauty's in the vale.*

Both. *Amid the shades the virgin's sighs
Add fragrance to the gale :
So they that will may take the hill,
Since love is in the vale.*

[*Exeunt, Arm in Arm, R.H.*

Enter BELVILLE, L.H.

Bel. I tremble at the impression this lovely girl has made on my heart. My cheerfulness has left me, and I am grown insensible even to the delicious pleasure of making those happy who depend on my protection.

AIR.

*Ere bright Rosina met my eyes,
How peaceful pass'd the joyous day !
In rural sports I gain'd the prize,
Each virgin listen'd to my lay.*

*But now no more I touch the lyre,
 No more the rustic sport can please ;
 I live the slave of fond desire,
 Lost to myself, to mirth, and ease.*

*The tree that in a happier hour,
 It's boughs extended o'er the plain,
 When blasted by the lightning's power,
 Nor charms the eye, nor shades the swain.*

Since the sun rose, I have been in continual exercise ; I feel exhausted, and will try to rest a quarter of an hour on this bank. (*Lies down on a Bank by the Fountain.*)

Gleaners pass the Stage, L.H.U.E. with Sheaves of Corn on their Heads ; ROSINA last, who comes forward singing.

AIR.—ROSINA.

*Light as thistle-down moving, which floats on the air,
 Sweet gratitude's debt to this cottage I bear :
 Of autumn's rich store I bring home my part,
 The weight on my head, but gay joy on my heart.*

Ros. What do I see ? Mr. Belville asleep ? I'll steal softly—at this moment I may gaze on him without blushing.—(*Lays down the Corn, and walks softly up to him.*) The sun points full on this spot ; let me fasten these branches together with this riband, and shade him from its beams—yes—that will do :—But if he should wake—(*Takes the Riband from her Bosom, and ties the Branches together.*) How my heart beats ! One look more—Ah ! I have wak'd him.

(*She flies, and endeavours to hide herself against the Door of the Cottage, turning her Head every instant.*)

Bel. What noise was that ? (*Half raising himself.*)—This riband I have seen before, and on the lovely Rosina's bosom.—(*He rises, and goes toward the Cottage.*)

Ros. I will hide myself in the house. (*Rosina, opening the Door, sees Capt. Belville, and starts back.*) Heavens ! a man in the house !

Capt. B. Now, love assist me !

(Comes out and seizes Rosina ; she breaks from him, and runs affrighted across the Stage ; Belville follows ; Captain Belville, who comes out to pursue her, sees his Brother, and steals off at the other Side ; Belville leads Rosina back.)

Bel. Why do you fly thus, Rosina ?

Ros. *(Leaning on Belville, who supports her in his Arms.)* Where is he !—A gentleman pursued me—

(Looking round.)

Bel. Don't be alarmed,—'twas my brother ;—he could not mean to offend you.

Ros. Your brother ! Why then does he not imitate your virtues ? Why was he here ?

Bel. Forget this : you are safe. But tell me, Rosina, for the question is to me of importance, have I not seen you wear this riband ?

Ros. Forgive me, sir ; I did not mean to disturb you. I only meant to shade you from the too great heat of the sun.

Bel. To what motive do I owe this tender attention ?

Ros. Ah, sir ; do not the whole village love you ?

Bel. You tremble ; why are you alarmed ?

DUETT.—BELVILLE and ROSINA.

Bel. *(Taking her hand.)* For you, my sweet maid,
 nay, be not afraid, *(Ros. withdraws her hand.)*
I feel an affection which yet wants a name.

Ros. When first—but in vain—I seek to explain,
 What heart but must love you ? I blush, fear, and
 shame—

Bel. Why thus timid, Rosina ? still safe by my side,
 Let me be your guardian, protector, and guide.

Ros. My timid heart pants—still safe by your side,
 Be you my protector, my guardian, my guide.

Bel. Why thus timid, &c.

Ros. My timid heart pants, &c.

Bel. Unveil your mind to me, Rosina. The graces of your form, the native dignity of your mind which breaks through the lovely simplicity of your deportment, a thousand circumstances concur to convince me you were not born a villager.

Ros. To you, sir, I can have no reserve. A pride, I hope an honest one, made me wish to sigh in secret over my misfortunes.

Bel. (Eagerly) They are at an end.

Ros. Dorcas approaches, sir; she can best relate my melancholy story.

Enter DORCAS, R.H.

Dor. His honour here? Good lack!

Bel. Will you let me speak with you a moment alone, Dorcas!

Dor. Rosina, take this basket.

[Exit Rosina with the Basket, R.H.]

Bel. Rosina has referred me to you, Dorcas, for an account of her birth, which I have long suspected to be above her present situation.

Dor. To be sure, your honour, since the dear child gives me leave to speak, she's of as good a family as any in England. Her mother, sweet lady, was my bountiful old master's daughter, squire Welford, of Lincolnshire. His estate was seiz'd for a mortgage of not half its value, just after young madam was married, and she ne'er got a penny of her portion.

Bel. And her father?—

Dor. Was a brave gentleman too, a colonel. His honour went to the Eastern Indies, to better his fortune, and madam would go with him. The ship was lost, and they, with all the little means they had, went to the bottom. Young madam Rosina was their only child; they left her at school; but when this sad news came, the mistress did not care for keeping her, so the dear child has shar'd my poor morsel.

Bel. But her father's name?

Dor. Martin; colonel Martin.

Bel. I am too happy; he was the friend of my father's

heart : a thousand times have I heard him lament his fate. Rosina's virtues shall not go unrewarded.

Dor. Yes, I know'd it would be so. Heaven never forsakes the good man's children.

Bel. I have another question to ask you, Dorcas, and answer me sincerely ; is her heart free ?

Dor. To be sure, she never would let any of our young men come a-near her ; and yet—

Bel. Speak : I am on the rack.

Dor. I'm afraid, she mopes and she pines.—But your honour would be angry,—I'm afraid the captain—

Bel. Then my foreboding heart was right. (*Aside.*)

Enter RUSTIC, L.H.

Rust. Help, for heaven's sake, sir ! Rosina's lost :—she is carried away—

Bel. Rosina !

Enter CAPTAIN BELVILLE, R.H.

Capt. B. (Confusedly) Don't be alarm'd—let me go—I'll fly to save her.

Bel. With me, sir ;—I will not lose sight of you. Rustic, hasten instantly with our reapers. Dorcas, you will be our guide.

Rust. Don't be frightened, sir ; the Irishmen have rescued her ; she is just here. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Enter the TWO IRISHMEN, R.H.

1st. Irish. (To Dorcas) Dry your tears, my jewel ; we have done for them.

Dor. Have you sav'd her ? I owe you more than life.

1st. Irish. Faith, good woman, you owe me nothing at all. I'll tell your honour how it was. My comrades and I were crossing the meadow, going home, when we saw them first ; and hearing a woman cry, I look'd up, and saw them putting her into a skiff against her will. Says I, " Paddy, is not that the clever little crater that was glancing in the field with us this morning ?"—" 'Tis so, sure enough," says he.—" By St. Patrick," says I, " there's enough of us to rescute her." With that we

ran for the bare life, waded up to the knees, laid about us bravely with our shillelays, knock'd them out of the skill, and brought her back safe: and here she comes, my jewel.

Re-enter RUSTIC, leading ROSINA, R.H., who throws herself into DORCAS'S Arms.

Dor. I cannot speak;—Art thou safe?

Bel. I dread to find the criminal.

Rust. Your honour need not go far a-field, I believe; it must have been some friend of the captain's, for his French valet commanded the party.

Capt. B. I confess the crime; my passion for Rosina hurried me out of myself.

Bel. You have dishonour'd me, dishonour'd the glorious profession you have embrac'd.—But begone; I renounce you as my brother, and renounce my ill-plac'd friendship.

Capt. B. Your indignation is just; I have offended almost past forgiveness. Will the offer of my hand repair the injury?

Bel. If Rosina accepts it, I am satisfied.

Ros. (*To Belville.*) Will you, sir, suffer!—This, sir, is a second insult. Whoever offends the object of his love is unworthy of obtaining her.

Bel. This noble refusal paints your character. I know another, Rosina, who loves you with as strong, though purer ardour:—but if allowed to hope—

Ros. Do not, sir, envy me the calm delight of passing my independent days with Dorcas; in whom I have found a mother's tenderness.

Bel. Do you refuse me too then, Rosina? (*Rosina raises her Eyes tenderly to Belville, lowers them again, and leans on Dorcas.*)

Dor. You, sir? You?

Ros. My confusion,—my blushes,—

Bel. Then I am happy! My life! my Rosina!

Phæ. Do you speak to his honour, William.

Will. No; do you speak, Phæbe.

Phæ. I am asham'd;—William and I, your honour—William pray'd me to let him keep me company;—so

he gain'd my good will to have him, if so be my grandmother consents.

(*Curtseying, and playing with her Apron.*)

Will. If your honour would be so good to speak to Dorcas.

Bel. Dorcas, you must not refuse me any thing to-day. I'll give William a farm.

Dor. Your honour is too kind ;—take her, William, and make her a good husband.

Will. That I will, dame.

Will. and Phœ. (*To Belville.*) Thank your honour.

(*Belville joins their Hands; they bow and curtsey.*)

Will. What must I do with the purse, your honour? Dorcas would not take it.

Bel. I believe my brother has the best right.

Capt. B. 'Tis yours, William ; dispose of it as you please.

Will. Then I'll give it to our honest Irishmen, who fought so bravely for Rosina. [*Exeunt Irishmen, R.H.*]

Bel. You have made good use of it, William ; nor shall my gratitude stop here.

Capt. B. Allow me to retire, brother. When I am worthy of your esteem, I will return, and demand my rights in your affection.

Bel. You must not leave us, brother. Resume the race of honour ; be indeed a soldier, and be more than my brother ;—be my friend.

FINALE.

Bel. *To bless, and to be blest, be ours,
Whate'er our rank, whate'er our powers ;
On some her gifts kind fortune showers,
Who reap, like us, in this rich scene.*

Capt. B. *Yet those who taste her bounty less,
The sigh malevolent repress,
And loud the feeling bosom bless,
Which something leaves for want to glean.*

Ros. *How blest am I, supremely blest !
Since Belville all his soul exprest,
And fondly clasp'd me to his breast :
I now may reap—how chang'd the scene !*

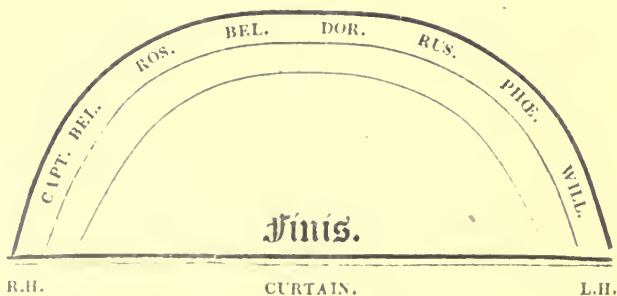
*But ne'er can I forget the day,
When all to want and woe a prey,
Soft pity taught his soul to say,
" Unfeeling Rustic, let her glean!"*

*Rust.
Will.
Phœ.*

*{ The hearts you glad your own display,
The hear'ns such goodness must repay ;
And blest through many a summer's day,
Full crops you'll reap in this rich scene ;*
*{ And O ! when summer's joys are o'er,
And autumn yields its fruits no more,
New blessings be there yet in store,
For winter's sober hours to glean.*

Cho. And O ! when summer's joys are o'er, &c.

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.







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